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PREFACE

This volume contains four important plays,—the 'Misanthrope' and 'Tartuffe,' perhaps the masterpieces of Molière, 'Amphitryon' and 'Don Juan.'

In the last-named play, Molière brought the language of the peasants on the stage for the first time. To render this into ordinary English would have been to destroy all the freshness and simplicity of the original; and after many failures in other directions, I succeeded in obtaining the kind help of Mr. Elworthy, whose works on English Dialect are so well known and so deservedly valued. Modified Somerset has been employed: the pure *patois* would not be comprehensible to ordinary readers; moreover the *patois* of Molière is not pure.

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THE FORCED MARRIAGE.

(LE MARIAGE FORCÉ.)

'Le Mariage Forcé,' of which the idea is taken from Rabelais, is a Comedy-ballet. It was first produced in three acts at the Louvre, on the 29th of January, 1664. Louis XIV., then twenty-six years old, appeared in the ballet as one of the gipsies, and the play was therefore called the *Ballet du Roi*. It was acted on the 15th of February, in one act, at the Palais Royal. Molière acted the part of Sganarelle.

M. Taschereau says of the 'Mariage Forcé': "This comedy contains two scenes, those of Sganarelle and the philosophers Pancrace and Marphurius, which may be considered by many readers as paltry farces; but whoever will go back to those days of fanatic Aristotelism, will understand that there is deeper meaning in them than the wish to make people laugh. Molière had a more important aim in view, and he succeeded in it. The University of Paris was on the eve of obtaining the confirmation of a sentence of the Parliament of Paris, dated September 4, 1624, which condemned to death all those who would dare to attack the Aristotelian doctrines. The ridicule thrown on these principles in the 'Mariage Forcé,' compelled, no doubt, the University to suspend its attacks."

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

SGANARELLE.

GERONIMO.

ALCANTOR, *father to* DORIMÈNE.

ALCIDAS, *brother to* DORIMÈNE.

LYCASTE, *in love with* DORIMÈNE.

PANCRACE, *an Aristotelian philosopher.*

MARPHURIUS, *a Pyrrhonian philosopher.*

DORIMÈNE, *a young coquette, promised to* SGANARELLE.

Two Gipsies.

The scene is in a public place.

THE FORCED MARRIAGE.

Scene I.—Sganarelle.

Sgan. (*speaking to the people in his house*). I am coming back directly. Take great care of the house, and see that everything goes on all right. If anyone comes to bring me some money, send directly for me, at Mr. Geronimo's; if, on the contrary, it is to ask for some, say that I am out for the day.

Scene II.—Sganarelle, Geronimo.

Ger. (*having heard the last words of* Sganarelle). A very prudent order.

Sgan. Ah! Mr. Geronimo. I am so pleased to see you; I was just going to your house.

Ger. And why, pray?

Sgan. To consult you about something I have in my head.

Ger. At your service. I am glad we have met, and we can talk together here in all security.

Sgan. Put your hat on, I beg of you. It is about a thing of great importance which has been proposed to me, and it is always well to do nothing without first asking the advice of one's friends.

Ger. I am much obliged to you for having chosen me. Let me hear what it is.

Sgan. Before I tell you, I must have a promise that you will not flatter me in any way, but will tell me your opinion frankly.

Ger. I will do so, since you wish it.

SGAN. I think that nothing can be worse than a friend who doesn't speak frankly.

GER. You are quite right.

SGAN. Sincere friends are rare in our days.

GER. Very true.

SGAN. You promise me, then, Mr. Geronimo, to speak to me freely and openly?

GER. Yes, I promise you.

SGAN. Swear it.

GER. Well, upon the word of a friend. Only, tell me what the business is.

SGAN. I want to know from you whether I should do well to marry.

GER. Who? You!

SGAN. Yes; I, myself. What is your advice on the subject?

GER. I want you first to tell me one thing.

SGAN. What is it?

GER. How old may you be?

SGAN. I?

GER. Yes.

SGAN. Upon my word, I hardly know; but I am in very good health.

GER. What! you don't know your own age within a few years or so?

SGAN. No, indeed, I don't. Whoever thinks about his age?

GER. Humph! Just tell me, pray, how old you were when we first became acquainted?

SGAN. Oh! I was only twenty then.

GER. How long did we stop in Rome together?

SGAN. Eight years.

GER. How long were you in England?

SGAN. Seven years.

GER. And in Holland, where you went afterwards?

SGAN. Five years and a half.

GER. How long is it since you returned?

SGAN. I came back in '52.

GER. If we take fifty-two from sixty-four, we get twelve; five years you spent in Holland, seventeen; seven years spent in England, twenty-four; eight years in Rome,

thirty-two; and if to thirty-two we add your age when we first became acquainted, we have exactly fifty-two. So that, Mr. Sganarelle, according to your own confession, you are between fifty-two and fifty-three years of age.

SGAN. Who, I? It isn't possible!

GER. Hang it! the calculation is exact enough. Now, I will tell you frankly, as a friend—according to the promise you made me give you—that marriage would suit you but little. Marriage is a thing about which young people ought to think long and seriously before they risk themselves, but of which people of your age ought not to think at all; and if, as some say, the greatest folly a man can commit is to marry, I know nothing more preposterous than to commit such a folly at a time of life when we should be most prudent. In short, to speak to you plainly, I advise you not to marry; and I should think you very ridiculous if, after having remained free up to your time of life, you were now to burden yourself with the heaviest of all chains.

SGAN. And, for my part, I tell you that I am determined to marry, and that I shall not be ridiculous in marrying the girl I am engaged to.

GER. Ah! that's quite another thing. You didn't tell me that.

SGAN. She pleases me; in fact, I love her with all my heart.

GER. You love her with all your heart?

SGAN. Most certainly; and I have asked her father's consent.

GER. You have asked her father's consent?

SGAN. Yes. The marriage is to take place this evening; I have given my word.

GER. Oh! by all means marry, then; I haven't another word to say.

SGAN. Why should I give up the idea? Do you imagine, then, Mr. Geronimo, that I am no longer fit to think of a wife? Don't let us speak of what my age may be, but consider things as they are. Is there a man of thirty years of age more fresh and hearty than I am? Have I not as free a use of my limbs as ever? Do I look as if I needed a carriage or a chair to get about in? Are not

all my teeth perfect? (*showing his teeth.*) Do I not eat heartily my four meals a day, and can you find a man with a stronger chest than mine? (*coughing*) Hem! hem! hem! Well, what do you say?

GER. You are quite right; I was wrong. You will do well to marry.

SGAN. I was formerly very much against marriage, but now I have strong reasons for it. Besides the pleasure I shall have in possessing a pretty wife who will fondle and coddle me, and pet me when I am tired—besides this pleasure, I consider that, by remaining as I am, I am allowing the line of the Sganarelles to become extinct; whilst by marrying, I shall see myself reproduced, and have the joy of beholding young creatures who have sprung from me—little beings who will be as like me as two peas; who will always be playing about the house and calling me their papa; who, when I come back from town, will prattle their little nonsense to me in the pleasantest manner possible. Upon my word, I can almost fancy that the thing is done, and that I see half-a-dozen of them round me.

GER. Nothing can be more charming than all that, and I advise you to marry as quickly as possible.

SGAN. Seriously, you advise me to do it?

GER. To be sure; you could not do better.

SGAN. Really, I am delighted that you should, as a true friend, give me this advice.

GER. Well, and who is the person you are going to marry?

SGAN. Dorimène.

GER. Young Dorimène, so gay and so well dressed?

SGAN. Yes.

GER. Alcantor's daughter?

SGAN. The very same.

GER. And sister to a certain Alcidas, who takes upon himself to wear a sword?

SGAN. Just so.

GER. Mercy on me!

SGAN. What do you say to it?

GER. A good match! Marry, marry at once.

SGAN. I have chosen well. Have I not?

GER. Decidedly; you could not have done better. Hurry the marriage on.

SGAN. You overwhelm me with joy by saying so. I thank you very much for your advice, and I beg you to come to-night to our wedding.

GER. I will not fail; and the better to do honour to the occasion I will come masked.*

SGAN. Good-bye.

GER. (*aside*). Young Dorimène, Alcantor's daughter, to Sganarelle, who is only fifty-three years old! A splendid match! A splendid match! (*This he repeats several times as he goes away.*)

SCENE III.—SGANARELLE (*alone*).

This marriage must be a happy one, for it pleases everybody, and everybody laughs to whom I mention it. I really am now the happiest of men.

SCENE IV.—DORIMÈNE (*page holding her train*), SGANARELLE.

DOR. (*speaking to her page*). Come, boy, hold up my train carefully; and let me have none of your tricks.

SGAN. (*aside, looking at* DORIMÈNE). Here is my lady-love coming. How pretty she is! What an air, and what a figure she has! Is there a man who on seeing her would not wish to be married? (*to* DORIMÈNE) Where are you going, my sweet darling, dear future wife of your future husband?

DOR. I am going to do a little shopping.

SGAN. Well, my pretty one, we are now both going to be happy. You will no longer have a right to refuse me anything, and I shall do whatever I please with you, without anybody being scandalised at it. You will belong to me from head to foot, and I shall be master of the whole of you: of your little twinkling eyes, of your little roguish nose, your tempting lips, your lovely ears, your pretty little chin, your little round breasts, your . . . . In short, all your person will be mine, and I shall be at liberty to kiss you as much as I please. Are you not very glad of this marriage, pretty one?

DOR. Delighted, I assure you! For the truth is, that

* Compare the 'Blunderer,' Act III. sc. xiii.

my father has kept me hitherto in the most grievous bondage. I have now for a long time rebelled against being so shut up, and have looked forward a hundred times to a marriage that would take me away from his authority and would leave me at liberty to do all I liked. Thank Heaven! you have come to relieve me; and now I am preparing myself for a life of pleasure and enjoyment to make amends for lost time. As you are a very worthy man, and know the world, I think we shall together lead the happiest possible life, and that you will not be one of those uncomfortable husbands who want their wives to live like owls. I assure you that I should not like that at all; such solitude drives me almost crazy. I like play, visits, parties, picnics, walks, and drives—in a word, all kinds of pleasures. You must be very glad to have such a wife. We shall never quarrel. I shall never interfere with what you do, and I hope you will never interfere with me; for I am of opinion that we ought to be mutually complaisant, and not marry to plague each other. In short, we shall live, when married, like two people who understand the world. No jealous suspicions will trouble our peace of mind; and it is quite enough that you should be assured of my fidelity, as I shall be persuaded of yours. But what is the matter with you? your face is strangely altered.

SGAN. The vapours have got into my head.

DOR. It's an illness of which many people complain now-a-days; but our marriage will cure all that. Good-bye. I long to have a proper dress, and to throw off these old tatters. I am going to buy everything I want, and I'll send the tradespeople to settle with you.

SCENE V.—GERONIMO, SGANARELLE.

GER. Ah, Sganarelle! I am glad to find you still here. I have met with a jeweller, who, having heard that you were looking for a fine diamond ring to give to your bride, has earnestly desired me to say a word for him. He has a most beautiful one to sell.

SGAN. Oh! there is no hurry.

GER. How! What does that mean? What has become of the eagerness you showed just now?

SGAN. Certain little scruples have just come into my head on the question of marriage; and, before I quite decide, I would fain sift the matter thoroughly, and get somebody to interpret a dream I had last night, and which I have just now recollected. You know that dreams are like mirrors, where we sometimes discover all that is to take place. I dreamt that I was in a ship on a very boisterous sea, and that . . . .

GER. Mr. Sganarelle, I have just now a little business on hand, which prevents me from hearing what you have to say. Besides, I understand nothing about dreams; and as for arguments for and against marriage, you have for neighbours two learned men—two philosophers—who will tell you all that can be said on the subject. As they are of different sects, you can compare their opinions of the matter. For my own part, I have already told you what I think, and I remain your most obedient. (*Exit.*)

SGAN. He is right. I must, in my uncertainty, go and consult those men.

SCENE VI.—PANCRACE, SGANARELLE.

PANC. (*turning towards the side by which he entered, and without seeing* SGANARELLE). Go, my friend! You are an impertinent fellow; a man ignorant of all wholesome knowledge, and deserving of banishment from the republic of letters.

SGAN. Good! Here is one of them coming at the very nick of time.

PANC. (*going on without seeing* SGANARELLE). Yes, I will demonstrate to you, by strong arguments—I will prove to you by Aristotle, the philosopher of philosophers—that you are *ignorans*, *ignorantissimus*, *ignorantificans*, *ignorantificatus*, through all imaginable moods and cases.

SGAN. (*aside*). He must have fallen out with somebody. (*to* PANCRACE) Sir! . . . .

PANC. (*still not noticing* SGANARELLE). You take upon yourself to argue, and you do not even understand the very elements of reason!

SGAN. (*aside*). His anger prevents him from seeing me. (*to* PANCRACE) Sir! . . . .

PANC. (*still not noticing* SGANARELLE). A proposition to be condemned in all the regions of philosophy!

SGAN. (*aside*). Somebody must have greatly provoked him. (*to* PANCRACE) I . . . .

PANC. (*still not noticing* SGANARELLE). *Toto cœlo, tota via aberras.*

SGAN. My humble respects, Doctor.

PANC. At your service.

SGAN. May I . . . .

PANC. (*turning again towards the door by which he entered*). Do you even know what you have done? A syllogism *in Balordo.*

SGAN. I beg of you . . . .

PANC. The major is foolish, the minor trivial, and the conclusion ridiculous.

SGAN. I . . . .

PANC. I had rather die than admit what you say, and I'll uphold my opinion with the last drop of my ink.

SGAN. May I . . . ?

PANC. Yes, I'll defend this proposition, *pugnis et calcibus, unguibus et rostro.*

SGAN. Mr. Aristotle, may I know what cause you have for being in such a passion?

PANC. The best possible cause.

SGAN. What is it, pray?

PANC. An ignoramus has dared to maintain to me a proposition which is false; a hideous, frightful, execrable proposition.

SGAN. May I ask what it is?

PANC. Ah! Mr. Sganarelle, everything is turned upside down in our days, and the world is fallen into general corruption. A horrible licence prevails everywhere; and the magistrates who are appointed to maintain order in this kingdom ought to die of shame, for allowing such an intolerable scandal as this that I am going to tell you.*

SGAN. What can it be?

PANC. Is it not a horrible thing, a thing that cries to Heaven for vengeance, to suffer anyone publicly to say the *form* of a hat?

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* A hit at the University of Paris. See Note, page 1.

SGAN. Eh? What?

PANC. I maintain that we should say the *figure* of a hat, and not the *form*. Forasmuch as there is this difference between the form and the figure, that the form is the external disposition of animate bodies, and figure the disposition of inanimate bodies; and, since the hat is a body without life, we must say the figure of a hat, and not the form. (*turning again towards the door by which he entered*) Yes, ignoramus that you are, it is thus you should speak, and these are the very terms of Aristotle himself in his chapter on *Qualities*.

SGAN. (*aside*). I thought that all was lost. (*to* PANCRACE) Mr. Doctor, pray think no more of this, I . . . .

PANC. I am beside myself with rage. I don't know what I am doing.

SGAN. Leave the form and the hat in peace. I have something to communicate to you. I . . . .

PANC. Impudent scoundrel!

SGAN. Calm yourself, I beg of you.

PANC. Ignorant ass!

SGAN. For mercy's sake, I . . . .

PANC. To try and force such a proposition upon me!

SGAN. He certainly is wrong. I . . . .

PANC. A proposition condemned by Aristotle.

SGAN. True. I . . . .

PANC. In express terms!

SGAN. You are quite right. (*turning towards the door by which* PANCRACE *came in*) Yes, you are a fool and an impudent fellow to pretend to argue with a doctor who can read and write. (*to* PANCRACE) Now, there is an end of the matter, and I pray you, hear me. I come to consult you upon an affair which perplexes me greatly. I intend to take a wife to keep me company at home. The person I have chosen is handsome, well made, she pleases me greatly, and is delighted to marry me. Her father has granted her to me; but I am a little fearful of you know what—that disgrace for which a man obtains no pity—and I entreat you, as a philosopher, to tell me what you think on the subject. Now, what is your opinion?

PANC. Rather than admit that we ought to say the *form* of a hat, I would admit that *datur vacuum in rerum natura*, and that I am an ass.

SGAN. (*aside*). Plague take the man. (*to* PANCRACE) I say, Mr. Doctor, do listen a little to what I have to say to you. I have been talking to you for the last hour, and not a word of what I want can I get out of you.

PANC. I beg your pardon; a righteous indignation has taken possession of my soul.

SGAN. Well, have done with all that, and take the trouble to listen to me.

PANC. Let it be so, then. What have you to say to me?

SGAN. I want to talk with you of a certain matter.

PANC. And what tongue do you wish to make use of?

SGAN. What tongue?

PANC. Yes.

SGAN. Why? the tongue I have in my mouth, to be sure. I am not likely to go and borrow my neighbour's.

PANC. I mean what idiom, what language?

SGAN. Oh! that's a different thing.

PANC. Do you wish to speak Italian to me?

SGAN. No.

PANC. Spanish?

SGAN. No.

PANC. German?

SGAN. No.

PANC. English?

SGAN. No.

PANC. Latin?

SGAN. No.

PANC. Greek?

SGAN. No.

PANC. Hebrew?

SGAN. No.

PANC. Syriac?

SGAN. No.

PANC. Turkish?

SGAN. No.

PANC. Arabic?

SGAN. No, no: French, French, French.

PANC. Oh! French.

SGAN. Yes, French.

PANC. Pass to the other side, then; this ear is for

all scientific and foreign languages, and the other is for the vulgar and mother tongue.

SGAN. (*aside*). What ceremonies these people exact!

PANC. What do you want?

SGAN. To consult you about a little difficulty.

PANC. Ah! oh! about a little difficulty in philosophy, no doubt?

SGAN. I beg your pardon, I . . . .

PANC. Perhaps you wish to know if substance and accident are synonymous terms or equivocal with regard to entity?

SGAN. No, I do not indeed.

PANC. If logic is an art or a science?

SGAN. Nothing of the kind. I . . . .

PANC. If it has for its object the three operations of the mind, or the third only?

SGAN. No. I . . . .

PANC. If there are ten categories, or only one?

SGAN. No, no.

PANC. If the conclusion is the essence of a syllogism?

SGAN. I tell you, no. I . . . .

PANC. Whether the essence of good is placed in appetibility or in congruity?

SGAN. No. I . . . .

PANC. Whether good reciprocates with the end?

SGAN. Eh! No. I . . . .

PANC. Whether the end can affect us by its real or by its intentional being?

SGAN. No, no, no, no, no, by all the devils, no.

PANC. Then you should explain your meaning, for I cannot guess it.

SGAN. I want to explain it to you, but you must listen to me. The business I want to consult you upon is this: I wish to marry a beautiful young girl. I love her dearly. I have asked her of her father; but as I dread . . . .

PANC. (*speaking at the same time without listening to* SGANARELLE). * Speech was given to man to express his thoughts, and just as thoughts are the representatives of things, even

* Molière has recast here some parts of his early farce, 'La Jalousie du Barbouillé;' *q. v.* vol. i.

so are our words representatives of our thoughts (SGANARELLE, *out of patience, stops the Doctor's mouth with his hand several times. The Doctor goes on speaking each time that* SGANARELLE *withdraws his hand*); but these representatives are different from other representatives, forasmuch as the other representatives are distinguished everywhere by their originals; while speech includes its original in itself, since it is nothing else than the thought expressed by an external sign. Whence it follows that those who think well are likewise those who speak the best. Therefore, explain your thoughts to me by speech, which is the most intelligible of all signs.

SGAN. (*pushing the Doctor into his house, and pulling the door to prevent his coming out*). Plague take the man!

PANC. (*within the house*). Yes, speech is *animi index, et speculum*. It is the interpreter of the heart. It is the image of the soul. (*He gets up to the window and goes on:*) It is a mirror which reproduces plainly the innermost secrets of our individuality. Since, then, you have the faculty of reasoning, and also of speaking, what can prevent you from making use of speech to make me understand your thoughts?

SGAN. That is what I want to do, but you won't listen to me.

PANC. I am listening; speak.

SGAN. I say, then, Doctor . . . .

PANC. But, above all things, be brief.

SGAN. Certainly.

PANC. Avoid prolixity.

SGAN. I say, sir . . . .

PANC. Cut your discourse short with a laconic apophthegm.

SGAN. I . . . .

PANC. No ambages, no circumlocution. (SGANARELLE, *enraged at being unable to speak, picks up stones to throw at the Doctor's head.*) What! you fly into a passion instead of explaining yourself? Get along, you are more impertinent than the fellow who maintained that we ought to say the *form* of a hat; and I will prove to you at any time, by the help of demonstrative and convincing reasons, and by argu-

ments *in Barbara*, that you are and never will be anything but a simpleton, and that I am and ever shall be, *in utroque jure*, the Doctor Pancrace. (*Exit.*)

SGAN. What an eternal jabberer!

PANC. (*coming back*). A man of letters; a man of erudition.

SGAN. What! more still?

PANC. A man of sufficiency, a man of capacity (*going away*). A man finished in all the sciences, natural, moral, and political. (*coming back*) A savant, *savantissime*, *per omnes modos et casus*. (*going away*) A man who has a knowledge *superlativè* of fables, mythologies, and histories; (*coming back*) grammar, poetry, rhetoric, dialectics, and sophistry; (*going away*) mathematics, arithmetic, optics, onirocritics, physics, and metaphysics; (*coming back*) cosmometry, geometry, architecture, speculary and speculatory sciences; (*going away*) medicine, astronomy, astrology, physiognomy, metoposcopy, chiromancy, geomancy.

SCENE VII.—SGANARELLE (*alone*).

Devil take these scholars! They will never listen to anybody. I see that it was the truth I was told, and that this Master Aristotle was a talker, and nothing else. I must go to the other; perhaps he will be more composed and more reasonable. Soho, there!

SCENE VIII.—MARPHURIUS, SGANARELLE.

MAR. What do you want with me, Mr. Sganarelle?

SGAN. Doctor, I have need of your advice upon a little affair which touches me closely, and I came here for that purpose. (*aside*) Come, it's all right in that quarter; this one listens to what people say.

MAR. Mr. Sganarelle, please to alter your way of expressing yourself. Our philosophy commands us not to enunciate any positive proposition, but always to speak of everything with uncertainty, and always to suspend our judgment. Therefore, you should not say, "I am come," but "it seems to me that I am come."

SGAN. Seems?

MAR. Yes.

SGAN. Upon my word, it must needs seem, when it is so.

MAR. The deduction is weak; it may seem so, without the thing being really so.

SGAN. What! It is not true that I am come?

MAR. It is questionable, and we should doubt everything.

SGAN. What! Am I not here, and are you not speaking to me?

MAR. It appears to me that you are here, and it seems to me that I am speaking to you, but it is not certain that it is so.

SGAN. Ah! now, come! Deuce take it! you are laughing at me. Here am I, and there you are, very plainly to be seen, and there is no *seem* in the matter. Pray let us drop all these subtleties, and let us talk of my business. I am come to tell you that I intend to marry.

MAR. I know nothing of the matter.

SGAN. But I tell you so.

MAR. It may happen.

SGAN. The girl I want to marry is very young and beautiful.

MAR. It's not impossible.

SGAN. Shall I do right or wrong to marry her?

MAR. Either the one or the other.

SGAN. (*aside*). Hey-day! This is another tune. (*to* MARPHURIUS) I ask you whether I shall do well to marry the girl I tell you of?

MAR. That depends.

SGAN. Shall I do wrong?

MAR. Perhaps.

SGAN. Pray answer me in a proper fashion.

MAR. That is my intention.

SGAN. I have a great liking for the girl.

MAR. That may be.

SGAN. The father has given her to me.

MAR. He may have done so.

SGAN. But by marrying her I fear to be deceived by her.

MAR. The thing might come to pass.

SGAN. What is your opinion about it?

MAR. I see no impossibility in it.

SGAN. But what would you do if you were in my place?
MAR. I don't know.
SGAN. What do you advise me to do?
MAR. Whatever may please you.
SGAN. I shall go mad.
MAR. I wash my hands of it.
SGAN. Deuce take the old dotard!
MAR. Whatever is to be, may be.
SGAN. Plague take the tormentor! I'll make you change your tune, you mad hound of a philosopher! (*Beats* MARPHURIUS.)
MAR. Oh! oh! oh!
SGAN. There is payment for your rubbishy nonsense. I am satisfied now.
MAR. How! What impudence! How dare you insult me in this fashion? To have the audacity to beat a philosopher like me!
SGAN. Correct, if you please, this way of expressing yourself. We should doubt everything; and you ought not to say that I have beaten you, but that it seems that I have beaten you.
MAR. I shall go and complain to the commissary.
SGAN. I wash my hands of it.
MAR. I have the marks on my body.
SGAN. It may be so.
MAR. It is you who treated me thus.
SGAN. It is not impossible.
MAR. I shall get a warrant against you.
SGAN. I know nothing of the matter.
MAR. And you will be condemned.
SGAN. Whatever is to be, may be.
MAR. You shall see.

SCENE IX.—SGANARELLE (*alone*).

Did you ever see the like! I can't force one word from that cur, and I am as wise at the end of his talk as at the beginning. What ought I to do in this uncertainty about the consequences of my marriage? Never was a man more perplexed than I am.—Hallo! here are some gipsies; I must ask them to tell me my fortune.

SCENE X.—TWO GIPSIES, SGANARELLE.

(*Enter the two Gipsies with their tabors, singing and dancing.*)

SGAN. They look jolly! I say, you there, can you tell me my fortune?

1ST GIP. Ay, ay, my good gentleman, we two here will tell it you.

2ND GIP. You have only to give us your hand and a cross inside,* and we will tell you something which will be of service to you.

SGAN. There, you have both my hands with what you want.

1ST GIP. You have a good face, my good gentleman; a good face.

2ND GIP. Yes, a good face. The face of a man who will be something some day.

1ST GIP. You will be married soon, my good gentleman; you will be married soon.

2ND GIP. You will marry a pretty wife, a pretty wife.

1ST GIP. Yes, a wife who will be admired and loved by everybody.

2ND GIP. A wife who will bring you many friends, my good gentleman; who will bring you many friends.

1ST GIP. A wife who will bring plenty into your house.

2ND GIP. A wife who will get you a great reputation.

1ST GIP. Through her you will enjoy great consideration, my good gentleman; great consideration.

SGAN. All this is very well; but tell me, is there any chance of my being deceived by her?

2ND GIP. Deceived?

SGAN. Yes.

1ST GIP. Deceived?

SGAN. Yes. Is there any chance of my being deceived by her?

(*The two Gipsies go off singing and dancing.*)

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* That is, a piece of money. Compare: "I should bear no *cross* if I did bear you; for I think you have no money in your purse."—SHAKESPEARE.

SGAN. But this is not the way to answer people. Come, come; I ask you both whether I shall be deceived.

2ND GIP. Deceived? You?

SGAN. Yes, yes!

1ST GIP. You deceived?

SGAN. Yes, yes! Tell me, yes or no?

(*The two Gipsies go off singing and dancing.*)

SCENE XI.—SGANARELLE (*alone*).

Plague the two baggages for leaving me in this state of doubt! But I must absolutely know what my marriage will bring me; and I shall, therefore, go and see that famous magician of whom everybody talks so much, and who, by his wonderful art, can show us everything we want to see. Heyday! I think, after all, I shall have no need of the magician, for here is something which will tell me all I wish to know. (*Hides.*)

SCENE XII.—DORIMÈNE, LYCASTE, SGANARELLE.

LYC. What! fair Dorimène, are you in earnest?

DOR. Yes, in earnest.

LYC. You really mean to marry?

DOR. Really.

LYC. And your wedding takes place to-night?

DOR. To-night.

LYC. And can you, cruel girl that you are, thus forget the love I have for you, and all the kind promises you have made me?

DOR. I? Not in the least. I have just the same feelings for you I have always had, and you need not be distressed by my marriage. I don't marry the man out of love, but simply because of his wealth. I have no fortune, neither have you; and you know that without money life is dull enough. In order to get some at any cost, I seized this opportunity of improving my position; and I have done it in the hope of soon being rid of the old dotard. He will soon die;—he has scarcely six months in him. I will warrant him dead within the time I tell you; and I shall not have long to pray Heaven for the happy state of

widowhood. (*She sees* SGANARELLE.) Ah, we were speaking about you, and were saying the most pleasant things imaginable about you.

LYC. Is this the gentleman . . . .

DOR. Yes, this is the gentleman who takes me for his wife.

LYC. Pray, sir, accept my sincere congratulations on your marriage, and believe me to be your most humble servant. You are about to marry a most honourable lady, I assure you. I also congratulate you, madam, on the happy choice you have made. You could not do better, for the gentleman has all the appearance of making an excellent husband. Yes, sir, I hope you will reckon me among your friends, and allow me sometimes to come and visit you.

DOR. You do us both too much honour. But come along, I am in a hurry now, and we shall have many opportunities of talking with him by and by.

(*Exeunt* DORIMÈNE *and* LYCASTE.)

SCENE XIII.—SGANARELLE.

I am now quite disgusted with my marriage, and I think I shall do wisely to go and break off my engagement. It has cost me some money, to be sure; but better lose that, than be exposed to something worse. I must try to get out of this business skilfully. Hallo!

(*Knocks at* ALCANTOR'S *door.*)

SCENE XIV.—ALCANTOR, SGANARELLE.

ALC. Ah! welcome, my son-in-law.

SGAN. Your most obedient.

ALC. You come to conclude the marriage?

SGAN. Pardon me.

ALC. I assure you that I long for it as much as you do.

SGAN. I come here on a different errand.

ALC. I have given all necessary orders for the fête.

SGAN. That isn't what I come for.

ALC. The musicians are engaged, the dinner is ordered, and my daughter is quite ready dressed to receive you.

SGAN. It isn't that which brings me here.

ALC. In short, everything will be arranged to your full satisfaction; nothing can delay your happiness.

SGAN. It is another thing. I tell you that I have come upon other business.

ALC. Come in, son-in-law.

SGAN. I have a word or two to say.

ALC. Ah! I beg of you, don't let us stand upon ceremony. Come in, I entreat.

SGAN. No, no, I tell you; I want to speak to you first.

ALC. You have something to tell me?

SGAN. Yes.

ALC. What is it?

SGAN. It is true, sir, that I have asked your daughter in marriage, and that you have agreed to give her to me; but I think myself a little too old for her, and I consider that I am not at all the kind of husband she ought to have.

ALC. Excuse me. My daughter is perfectly satisfied with you, and I am certain that she will live very happily with you.

SGAN. Oh dear, no. I have sometimes terrible whims, and she would have to suffer greatly from my bad temper.

ALC. My daughter is of a sweet and yielding disposition, and you will see that she will get on beautifully with you.

SGAN. I have some bodily infirmities which might disgust her.

ALC. That is of no consequence; a virtuous woman is never disgusted with her husband.

SGAN. In short, shall I tell you what? I do not advise you to give her to me.

ALC. Are you joking? I had rather die than break my word.

SGAN. On my conscience, I free you from your promise.

ALC. Certainly not. I have promised her to you, and you shall have her in spite of all the offers I receive from other quarters.

SGAN. (*aside*). The devil I shall!

ALC. I assure you I hold you in such great esteem, and have such real friendship for you, that I would refuse my daughter to a prince in order to give her to you.

SGAN. Sir, I am deeply indebted to you for the honour you do me; but I must tell you plainly that I will not marry.

ALC. Not marry, you say?

SGAN. Yes.

ALC. And why?

SGAN. The reason is that I find myself unfit for marriage, and that I wish to do like my father and all the Sganarelles, who never would marry.

ALC. Very well. Will is free; and I am not the man to force anybody. You were engaged to marry my daughter, and everything is ready for the wedding; but since you wish to withdraw, I will see what can be done. You shall soon hear from me.

SCENE XV.—SGANARELLE (*alone*).

After all, he is more reasonable than I expected, and I thought I should find it much more difficult to break off the marriage. Upon my word, when I think of it, I feel that I have done very wisely to get out of this business, and I was on the point of taking a step which, I fear, I should have repented at leisure. But here is the son coming to bring me an answer.

SCENE XVI.—ALCIDAS, SGANARELLE.

ALC. (*speaking all the while in a soft, affected tone*). Sir, I am your most obedient servant.

SGAN. Sir, I am yours with all my heart.

ALC. My father has told me, sir, that you have come to withdraw your promise to marry my sister.

SGAN. Yes, sir; it is with regret, but . . . .

ALC. Oh, there is no harm in it, sir.

SGAN. I assure you that I am very sorry about it, and I wish . . . .

ALC. It is of no consequence at all, I tell you. (ALCIDAS *presents two swords to* SGANARELLE.) Sir, will you kindly say which of these two swords you will have?

SGAN. Which of these two swords I will have?

ALC. If you please.

SGAN. What's the object of doing that?

ALC. As you refuse, sir, to marry my sister after having given your word, you will not, I believe, take amiss the compliment I have come to pay you.

SGAN. What do you mean?

ALC. There are some people who would make a great ado, and would get in a passion with you; but we prefer doing things in a more quiet way, and I have come to tell you very politely that we must, with your permission, cut each other's throat.

SGAN. A very ill-turned compliment this.

ALC. Now, sir, choose, if you please.

SGAN. I am your servant; my throat is not one to be cut. (*aside*) What an ugly way of speaking!

ALC. But, by your leave, sir, the thing must be so.

SGAN. Oh! sir, a truce to these compliments, I beseech you.

ALC. Let us be quick, sir, I have some little business awaiting me.

SGAN. I will have nothing to do with this, I tell you.

ALC. You will not fight?

SGAN. No, upon my soul, I will not.

ALC. Do you mean it?

SGAN. Yes, I mean it.

ALC. (*after beating him with his stick*). At least, sir, you have no reason to complain; you see that I do things in the proper way. You break your word, and I wish to fight you; you refuse to fight, and I thrash you. All this is according to rule, and you are too much of a gentleman to disapprove of my behaviour.

SGAN. (*aside*). What a devil of a man!

ALC. (*presenting him the swords again*). Come, sir, do the thing properly, and with a good grace.

SGAN. What! again?

ALC. Sir, I do not force anybody, but either you will marry my sister or you will fight.

SGAN. Sir, I assure you that I can do neither the one nor the other.

ALC. Positively?

SGAN. Positively.

ALC. With your permission, then. (*Beats him again.*)

SGAN. Oh! oh! oh!

ALC. Sir, I am exceedingly sorry to be obliged to treat you in this manner; but I shall not leave off until you promise me, if you please, either to fight me or to marry my sister (*raises his stick*).

SGAN. I'll marry, I'll marry.

ALC. Ah! sir, I rejoice to see you restored to reason, and that it is all settled quietly; for, in short, sir, I assure you that you are the man I esteem the most in the world, and that I should have been in despair if you had compelled me to ill-use you. Now, I will call my father and tell him that it is all right.

SCENE XVII.—ALCANTOR, DORIMÈNE, ALCIDAS, SGANARELLE.

ALCI. Father, the gentleman is now quite reasonable, and most willing to do things with a good grace; you can give my sister to him.

ALC. Sir, here is her hand; you need only give her yours. Heaven be praised! I have got rid of her, and upon you henceforth lies all the responsibility of her conduct. Let us all go and rejoice over this happy marriage.

THE PRINCESS OF ELIS.

(LA PRINCESSE D'ÉLIDE.)

'La Princesse d'Élide' was acted for the first time at Versailles, on the 8th of May, 1664. It formed a part of the magnificent fêtes given by Louis XIV. to the Queen-mother, Anne of Austria, and his wife, Maria Theresa, and also secretly, it is said, to Mademoiselle de la Vallière. They lasted seven days, and were called "Les Plaisirs de l'Ile Enchantée."* Molière, to honour the two queens, both of Spanish birth, chose a Spanish subject. In this piece, written to order, and also done in a great hurry, he does not do justice to himself.

Molière acted the part of Moron.

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* "In some editions of Molière the account of these fêtes ordered by the king is given in full. But we have left it aside as a useless encumbrance, and have confined ourselves to what directly relates to Molière." —Louandre. Such details are doubly "encumbrances" in a translation.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

IN THE COMEDY.

IPHITAS, *father to the* PRINCESS OF ELIS.

EURYALUS, *Prince of Ithaca.*

ARISTOMENES, *Prince of Messenia.*

THEOCLES, *Prince of Pylos.*

ARBATES, *governor to the Prince of Ithaca.*

THE PRINCESS OF ELIS.

AGLANTA, *cousin to the Princess.*

CYNTHIA, *cousin to the Princess.*

PHYLLIS, *attendant on the Princess.*

LYCAS, *attendant on* IPHITAS.

MORON, *the Princess's fool.*

IN THE PROLOGUE.

AURORA.

LYCISCAS, *a Huntsman.*

Three Whippers-in (*singing*).

Three Whippers-in (*dancing*).

IN THE INTERLUDES.

First Interlude.

MORON.
Huntsmen.

Second Interlude.

PHYLLIS.
MORON.
A Satyr singing.
Satyrs dancing.

Third Interlude.

PHYLLIS.
TIRCIS, *a Shepherd* (*singing*).
MORON.

Fourth Interlude.

THE PRINCESS.
PHYLLIS.
CLIMÈNE.

Fifth Interlude.

Shepherds and Shepherdesses (*singing*).
Shepherds and Shepherdesses (*dancing*).

The scene is in Elis.

PROLOGUE.

SCENE I.—AURORA; LYCISCAS, *and several other Whippers-in, asleep on the grass.*

AURORA (*sings*).

When to your hearts Love offers choice of blessing,
Yield, fair ones, to his charm;
Scorn to assume a haughty look, expressing
That pride your soul doth arm;
For at the age most meet for fond caressing
Love sheds the sweetest balm.
Sigh for one faithful heart to love you truly,
Unheeding those who blame;
A tender heart that cruel is unduly
Will win a sorry name;
And, at the age when one should love most truly,
Love's worth surpasses fame.

SCENE II.—LYCISCAS, *and Whippers-in, asleep.*

Three Whippers-in, awakened by AURORA, *sing together.*

Hullo! hullo! get up! get up! get up!
Everything must be made ready for the hunt to-day.
Hullo! quick! quick! get up! get up!

1ST WHIP. Day lightens the darkest spots.
2ND WHIP. And the air in dewdrops on the flowers lay.
3RD WHIP. The nightingales send their thrilling notes,
And the air resounds with their sweet melody.

ALL THREE. Up! up! get up! quick! quick! get up! (*to* LYCISCAS, *asleep*) How is this, Lyciscas? What! snoring still, you who had promised to outstrip Aurora? Hullo! hullo! get up! get up! get up quickly!

LYC. (*waking up*). Well! you are a set of noisy brawlers, and your throats are open early enough, I must say.

ALL THREE. Do you not see daylight spreading? Up! Lyciscas, up! quick! quick!

LYC. Oh! let me sleep a little longer, I pray.

ALL THREE. No, no! get up! Lyciscas, get up!

LYC. Grant me only one small quarter of an hour.

ALL THREE. No! no! nothing at all! Up! up!

LYC. I beg of you.

ALL THREE. Get up!

LYC. One moment.

ALL THREE. Get up!

LYC. For pity's sake.

ALL THREE. Get up!

LYC. Ah!

ALL THREE. Get up!

LYC. I . . . .

ALL THREE. Get up!

LYC. Soon, soon.

ALL THREE. No, no! directly! Lyciscas, get up! Everything must be made ready for the hunt to-day. Quick! quick! get up! get up!

LYC. Leave me alone; then I'll get up. You are strange people, to come and bother one so! You will be the cause of my being unwell all day; for, don't you see, sleep is a necessity of life, and when man does not sleep his fill, it happens that . . . . one is . . . . (*falls asleep again*).

1ST WHIP. Lyciscas!

2ND WHIP. Lyciscas!

3RD WHIP. Lyciscas!

ALL THREE. Lyciscas!

LYC. Deuce take the brawlers! I wish your mouths were full of scalding broth.

ALL THREE. Get up! get up! quick! get up! quick!

LYC. Ah! what misery not to sleep one's fill.

1ST WHIP. Soho, ho!

2ND WHIP. Soho, ho!

3RD WHIP. Soho, ho!

ALL THREE. Soho, ho! ho!

LYC. Ho! ho! ho! Plague take the fellows with their howlings. May the devil take me if I do not thrash you! But, just see what devilish enthusiasm to come and bawl in my ears like that. I . . . .

ALL THREE. Get up!

LYC. Again!

ALL THREE. Get up!

LYC. The devil take you.

ALL THREE. Get up!

LYC. (*getting up*). What! still! Was ever such a rage for singing heard of? 'Sdeath, I am bursting with anger. Since I am awake, I must wake up the others and torment them as I myself was tormented. Soho! gentlemen! get up! get up! quick! You sleep too long! I shall make a devil of a noise everywhere. (*He shouts with all his might.*) Get up! get up! get up! Everything must be made ready for the hunt to-day. Get up! get up! Lyciscas, get up! Ho! ho! ho! ho!

(*Several horns and hunting-horns are blown; and the Whippers-in, awakened by* LYCISCAS, *dance a ballet.*)

THE PRINCESS OF ELIS.

ACT I.

Scene I.—Euryalus, Arbates.

Arb. This dreamy thoughtfulness which has become habitual to you, and which makes you continually seek after solitude; those heavy sighs which burst from your heart, and those fixed looks so full of languor, say much to people of my experience. I believe, my lord, that I understand this language; still, I dare not, without your leave, explain it to you.

Eury. Explain, Arbates, explain with all freedom these sighs, these looks, this mournful silence. Say that Love has brought me under his sway, and now in his turn defies me; I give you leave. I even consent that you should make me ashamed of a heart weak enough to suffer itself to be conquered.

Arb. I, my lord, blame you for the tender feelings that have entered your breast! Old age gives me no bitter feelings against love. Although I am in the evening of life, I can say truly that love well becomes young hearts. In the tribute which you pay to a beautiful face I see a clear proof of a noble soul, and I think it very difficult for a young prince to be great or generous if he has never known love. It is a quality I admire in a monarch. It is a sure sign that everything good can be expected from a prince of your age, when the tenderness of his heart is revealed by his power to love. Yes, that passion, of all others the most beautiful, is the key to many virtues; it spurs the heart

to noble deeds; and all the great heroes have felt its power. I watched with interest your infancy, my lord. All the hopes I had formed of you have been realized. I observed in you qualities which spoke of the blood from which you sprung; I discovered in you wit, cleverness; I thought you handsome, great, and noble; your courage and abilities shone forth every day; still, I was disappointed, for love was wanting. But now that I see you suffering from its incurable wounds, I triumph, and my joyful heart sees in you a perfect prince.

EURY. Alas! my dear Arbates, if for a while I defied the power of Love, he takes now full vengeance! If you but knew what sufferings are torturing my heart, even you would wish that I had never loved. For see where my destiny leads me! She whom I so ardently love is the Princess of Elis. You know what pride is hidden under her divine charms: how it makes her resist all feelings of love; how she shuns, during these days of brilliant rejoicings, the society of that crowd of admirers attracted here with the hope of winning her. Ah! how untrue it is that the one we are destined to love, charms us at first sight—that the first glance kindles in our breast that passion to which we are destined from our birth! On my return from Argos I passed through this place and then saw the Princess. I looked upon her and all her charms as one contemplates a fine statue. I quietly beheld her dazzling youth, but the sight brought no trouble to my heart. I returned to the shores of Ithaca in perfect peace of mind, and lost even for two years all remembrance of her. Then, rumours of the scorn with which she treated every offer of homage reached my court. It was said that her proud soul had a most unconquerable aversion to the bonds of marriage; and that with a bow in her hand, a quiver on her shoulder, a second Diana, she frequented the woods, cared for nought but the chase, and let all the youth of Greece sigh for her in vain. We cannot wonder too much, Arbates, at the freaks of passion in our heart, nor at the strange workings of fate! The fame of her haughty coldness gave rise in my soul to unknown feelings which I could not master, and which her presence and beauty had failed to call forth. Her well-known contempt for love

had the secret power of bringing back all her features to my remembrance, and of making me look back at her charms with new eyes. I formed in my mind such a noble and beautiful image of her, I pictured to myself so much pride and such pleasure if I could but triumph over her coldness, that my heart, dazzled by the splendour of such a conquest, saw the glory of its liberty vanish away. In vain I tried to resist the attraction; its charm took such hold upon my senses that, urged on by an irresistible power, I sailed in all haste from Ithaca. Here, however, I conceal my ardent passion under the desire of appearing at these renowned sports, to which the illustrious Iphitas, father of the Princess, has invited most of the princes of Greece.

ARB. But, my lord, to what purpose do you use such precautions? And why are you resolved to keep your love a secret? You say you love this noble Princess, and that you come to display your skill before her, and yet no attentions, words, or sighs have told her of your love. For my part, I cannot conceive the wisdom of not declaring yourself; I cannot see what success a love which shuns the means of making itself known, can possibly expect.

EURY. And in what would it serve me to declare my love, Arbates? Should I not draw on myself her haughty disdain, and rank myself among those submissive princes whom she considers her enemies from the moment they have declared themselves her lovers? The sovereigns of Messenia and Pylos pay useless homage to her, and the fame of their great virtues is in vain seconded by faithful deference. This repulse of their love makes me conceal in silence all the violence of mine. When I consider the fate of these famous rivals, I feel myself already condemned, and in her contempt for them I read my own sentence.

ARB. Yet it is from that contempt and haughty disposition that you should derive your brightest hope, since all you have to conquer is a simple coldness; and you might have been opposed by a previous love. A heart already prepossessed resists with wonderful power, but a free heart is easily won. Patience is all you require in order to triumph over her indifference. Believe me, hide from her no longer the conquest her eyes have made, declare all the depth of your love, and, far from trembling at the fate

of others, let their failure give you strength. Perhaps to touch her stony heart you possess secrets which those princes have not; and if her haughty caprice is, after all, as severe towards you, it will be a comfort for you in such misfortunes to see your rivals equally rejected.

EURY. I am glad to hear you advise me to let her know of my love. By combating the reasons I have given you you delight my soul, for in speaking to you I particularly wanted to discover if you would approve what I have done. In short, since I want to take you into my confidence, know that my silence will to-day be interpreted to the Princess, and that at this very moment she may be hearing of the secret of my heart. This chase to which she went in order to avoid the crowd of her admirers, is the time chosen by Moron for speaking of my love.

ARB. Moron, my lord!

EURY. This choice surprises you. You judge of him by his title of fool; but know that he is much less of a fool than he chooses to appear, and that, in spite of his employment, he has much more sense than those who laugh at him. The Princess likes to hear his queer sayings; he has got into favour with her through his many amusing jests; and by his free access to her, he can persuade and can say to her many things which others would not even dare to hint. In short, I think him the very messenger I require. He says he feels a great affection for me: and, as he was born in my kingdom, he will assist my love against all my rivals. A little money put in his hand to support his zeal . . . .

SCENE II.—EURYALUS, ARBATES, MORON.*

MOR. (*hidden from view*). Help, help! Save me from this cruel beast!

EURY. Surely, it is his voice.

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* "The office of court-fool was not altogether abolished, even in the time of Louis XIV. The fool kept by the king was called Angeli, and had formerly belonged to the Prince de Condé. The court-fools, who had never been represented on the stage since the time of 'La Princesse d'Élide,' have been brought back again by the Romantic School."—AIMÉ MARTIN.

MOR. (*as before*). Help, help, for pity's sake!

EURY. It is he. Where is he running to in such a fright?

MOR. (*entering without seeing anyone*). Where can I go and hide myself from this frightful boar? Preserve me, ye gods, from his horrible tusks! I vow to give you, if he does not eat me, four pounds of incense and two of the fattest calves. (*meeting* EURYALUS, *whom in his fright he takes for the boar he is flying from*). Oh! I am dead!

EURY. What is the matter?

MOR. I took you, my lord, for the beast whose mouth I beheld ready to disfigure me. I cannot recover from my fright.

EURY. What was it?

MOR. Oh! what a strange taste for a princess? And what foolish condescension it entails upon us. Deuce take it! What pleasure can hunters find in being exposed to a thousand fears? Now, if a man were only to hunt hares, rabbits, or young does, I should understand it; they are animals of a gentle nature, which always run away from us; but to go and attack those very ugly beasts which show no respect for the human countenance and hunt those who hunt them, is, I must say, a strange, foolish pastime, and I cannot endure it.

EURY. Tell us what happened?

MOR. What a toilsome labour for our Princess to embark in! I could have sworn, though, that she would have played us this trick. The chariot-race being to-day, she must needs go and hunt in order to show greater contempt for those sports, and display . . . . But enough; let me go on with my tale. Where did I leave off?

EURY. You spoke of toilsome : . . .

MOR. Ah, yes. Well, then, fainting under that terrible work (for I was up at daybreak and decked out as a famous hunter), I shrank away from all our people, like a true hero. Finding a place suitable for a cosy nap, I laid me down comfortably, and, composing myself, I was soon going in for a loud snore, when a horrible noise made me lift up my head, and there, there before me, coming out of a thicket, I saw a boar, a boar of an enormous size, which . . . .

EURY. What is the matter?

MOR. Oh! nothing. Pray, do not be frightened; only let me for a certain reason get between you two. You see I shall be in a better position to tell you the whole thing as it happened. Yes, I beheld the very boar which was being hunted by our party. His bristles all set up, he looked frightful! His flaming eyes flashed nothing but threats, and his ugly mouth showed through the foam certain tusks for those who dared to venture near him . . . . I leave it to your imagination! Before this horrible sight I seized my weapons; but the false-hearted beast, showing no fear, rushed straight at me. And yet I had never spoken a word to him.

ARB. And you received him without flinching?

MOR. No such fool! I threw away everything, and ran like mad.

ARB. You ran away from a boar, when you had weapons to kill him? That was not a valiant deed, Moron.

MOR. I own it. It was not a valiant deed, but it was a wise one.

ARB. Yet, if we do not immortalize ourselves by some great exploit . . . .

MOR. I am your servant. I had much rather it should be said, "This is the place where from the fury of a wild boar, without hesitating, Moron saved his life by taking to his heels," than it should be said, "This is the famous spot where the brave Moron, with heroic boldness, faced a wild boar, which tore him to pieces."

EURY. Very good.

MOR. Yes; begging glory's pardon, I had rather live two days in the world than a thousand years in history.

EURY. Indeed, your death would grieve your friends. But, if you have somewhat recovered from your fright, may I inquire whether my love . . . .

MOR. I will not hide from you, my lord, that I have done nothing as yet, for I have not found the opportunity that I could have wished of talking to the Princess. The office of a court buffoon has its prerogatives, it is true; still, we are oftentimes checked in the liberties we take, and to speak of your love is rather a delicate matter; for love with our Princess is high treason. You know in

what she prides herself; that she has taken it into her head to declare war to the matrimonial state, and to treat Cupid as an inferior deity. The matter will require careful handling, if we do not wish to rouse her tiger-like temper. One must be careful when speaking to the great, for they are rather dangerous at times. Leave it to me, then, to manage this business quietly. I feel a burning zeal for your house: you were born my prince, and certain other ties may make me wish to work for your good. My mother, in her time, was thought somewhat handsome, and was not naturally cruel. Your late father, that noble prince, was very dangerous in affairs of gallantry; and I know that Elpenor, who was called my father because he married my mother, boasted among our people, that the prince, in days gone by, used to stop sometimes at his house, and that he had the pleasure, in those days, of seeing all the village salute him. But, enough; be that as it may, I must endeavour . . . . Ah! here comes the Princess, with two of your rivals.

SCENE III.—THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA, ARISTOMENES, THEOCLES, EURYALUS, PHYLLIS, ARBATES, MORON.

ARIST. Do you reproach us, madam, for having saved you from this great peril? I should have thought that, as we knew nothing of this hunting, our killing that boar which so furiously attacked you, was an event for which we should have to thank our destiny. But your coldness only too plainly shows that I ought to think otherwise, and rather accuse fate for giving me a share in a deed that offends you.

THEO. For my part, madam, I consider it a great happiness to have been thus enabled to save you; and, although you may chide us for it, I cannot feel angry with fate for having offered me the occasion of serving you. I know that everything is unpleasant from a person whom we hate; but were your anger even greater, it is an extreme pleasure, to one who loves passionately, to rescue from danger the person he loves.

PRIN. And do you think, my lord,—since you force me to speak of it,—that such a peril could frighten me? Is

then the bow, so familiar to me, but a useless weapon in my hands? Do you think, accustomed as I am to roam alone over hills, plains, and woods, that I cannot hope to take care of myself while hunting? Surely, I have made but a bad use of my time and of the experience I boast of, if in such an emergency I cannot triumph over one poor beast! The generality of my sex are unable, according to you, to pretend to such deeds; but I beg you will allow me some degree of superiority in this, and will do me the justice to believe that, whatever may be the boar of to-day, fiercer boars than this have fallen by my hand.

THEO. But, madam . . . .

PRIN. Be it so. You want to persuade me that I owe you my life. I grant it willingly. Yes, without your help all would have been over with me. I therefore thank you with all my heart for your great help, and I will go at once to the prince to tell him what wonderful things your love has done for me.

SCENE IV.—EURYALUS, ARBATES, MORON.

MOR. Well! did ever a more haughty spirit tread the earth? She is angry because that frightful boar is killed. How willingly I would have offered the richest reward to anyone who would have rid me of him just now!

ARB. (*to* EURYALUS). I find you, my lord, all thoughtful before her haughtiness, but I see nothing in it to rob you of hope . . . . Her hour must come, and it may be that the honour of conquest is reserved for you.

MOR. She must before the race hear of your love, and I . . . .

EURY. No, Moron; it is no longer my wish that she should. Be careful you do not mention it to her, and leave it entirely to me to do what I please. I have decided on adopting an altogether different course. I see too well that she is resolved to despise all who think to gain her by deep respect. The deity which urges me to love her inspires me with a new device to conquer her. Yes, it is through him alone that such a thought can

have entered my mind, and it is to him that I shall owe my success.

ARB. May I know, my lord, the means by which you hope . . . .

EURY. You shall see it soon. Let us go; but mind you keep silent.

FIRST INTERLUDE.

SCENE I.—MORON (*alone*).

Fare you well, till I see you again; as for me, I shall remain here to engage in a little conversation with these trees and rocks.

Woods, meadows, fountains, flowers, that behold my pallid countenance, if you do not know it already, let me tell you that I love. Phyllis is the adored object; she it is who has captivated my heart. Yes, I became her wooer on seeing her milk her cow. Milk dropped from her fingers, but they, a thousand times whiter, pressed the udder with an unknown grace. Oh! the remembrance of this will very surely drive me mad. Ah! Phyllis! Phyllis! Phyllis!

SCENE II.—MORON, AN ECHO.

ECHO. Phyllis!
MOR. Ah!
ECHO. Ah!
MOR. Hem!
ECHO. Hem!
MOR. Ah! ah!
ECHO. Ah!
MOR. Ha, ha!
ECHO. Ha!
MOR. Oh!
ECHO. Oh!
MOR. Oh!
ECHO. Oh!
MOR. Well, this is a funny echo!

ECHO. Oh!
MOR. Oh!
ECHO. Oh!
MOR. Ah!
ECHO. Ah!
MOR. Hu!
ECHO. Hu!
MOR. Well, this is a funny echo!
ECHO. Oh!

SCENE III.—MORON *sees a bear coming towards him.*

Ah! Mr. Bear, I am with all my heart your very humble servant. For goodness' sake, spare me. I assure you that I am not worth eating—I am all bones and skin—and I can just see some people yonder who would do much better for you. Eh! eh! eh! my lord; gently, if you please, gently. (*caresses the bear, his limbs shaking with fright the while*) Ah, my lord! how pretty and wonderfully made your highness is! your look is most pleasing, your figure the prettiest shape in the world. Ah! what fine fur, fine head, fine, brilliant and large eyes! Ah! what a pretty little nose! what a pretty little mouth! what darling little teeth! Ah! what a fine throat! what beautiful tiny paws! what tiny nails, and so well shaped! (*The bear stands on his hind legs.*) Help! help! I am dead! Mercy on me! Poor Moron! Ah, ye gods! quick, quick to the rescue! I am undone! (*Climbs up a tree.*)

SCENE IV.—MORON, HUNTSMEN.

MOR. (*on the tree; speaks to the huntsmen*). Ah! gentlemen, take pity on me. (*Huntsmen fight with the bear.*) That's right, gentlemen! kill that ugly beast for me. Oh, heaven! help them! Good! he is running away. He stops, and falls upon them! Good! there is one who has just struck him in the mouth. They all surround him. Courage! don't give up; go on, my friends! Good! strike hard! Again! Ah! he is on the ground; he is done for—he is dead! I will come down now and give him a hundred blows. (MORON *comes down the tree.*) Your

servant, gentlemen! I thank you for having saved me from this beast. Now that you have killed him, I will finish him off, and then go with you and enjoy our triumph. (MORON *strikes the dead bear again and again.*)

THE BALLET.

(*The Hunters dance to show their joy at the victory.*)

ACT II.

SCENE I.—THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA, PHYLLIS.

PRIN. Yes, I love to retire to these peaceful spots where there is nothing but what enchants the eye, and where all the learned architecture of our palaces yields before the beauties of nature. These trees, these rocks, these brooks, this fresh turf, have for me charms that never tire.

AGLA. Like you, I love these peaceful retreats, where one can rest from the turmoil of the towns; a thousand things contribute to embellish them, and it is surprising that at the very gates of Elis there should be found such a beautiful and vast solitude* for the lovers of quiet. Yet I cannot help feeling that for you to come here during these days of great rejoicing appears unseasonable; and that it is very little less than an affront to the magnificent display made by the princes for the public entertainment. The splendid spectacle of the chariot-race well deserves the honour of your presence.

PRIN. What right have they to hope for my presence, and what do I owe after all to their magnificent display? They do all this to dazzle me, and my heart is the prize they strive after. But they may flatter themselves with hopes as much as they please; I doubt if any of them will win it.

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* An allusion to the creation of the palace and gardens of Versailles.

CYN. How long will your heart resent the trouble which is taken to touch it, and why will you look upon all that is done to please you as so many personal affronts? I know that it is displeasing to you to hear anyone take the part of love, but, related to you as I have the honour to be, I can ill bear with the harshness you show, and cannot encourage with deceitful flattery your resolutions of never loving. Is there anything more beautiful than the innocent love which real merit kindles in our heart? Where would the happiness of life be, if love were banished from the world? No, no, all true delights are derived from it: and to live without loving is, so to speak, not to live at all.*

AGLA. For my part, I think love the most charming thing in life; there can be no happiness without it, and all pleasures are insipid if not based upon it.

I'RIN. How can you, being princesses, talk as you do? Ought you not rather to blush at approving a passion which is nothing but error, weakness, transport—disorders so opposed to the glory of our sex? I mean to maintain its honour to the last day of my life, and I will never trust myself to those men who act the slaves near us in order one day to become our tyrants. All those tears and sighs, all that homage and respect, are but snares laid for the heart, and cause it to act unworthily. For my part, when I consider certain examples and see the dreadful meannesses to which those under the sway of love can degrade themselves, my heart is moved with indignation, and I cannot bear that a soul with ever so little pride should not feel a horrible shame at them.

CYN. Ah! madam, there are certain weaknesses in which there is no shame; on the contrary, some which we should be proud of having, even in the highest ranks of glory. I hope that some day you will alter your opinion, and if it pleases Heaven we shall before long see your heart . . . .

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* Up to this point the comedy is written in verse, but an order from the king hurried the author on, and compelled him to write the remainder in prose, and to pass lightly over several scenes which he had intended to make more of, if he had had more time.—Note by MOLIÈRE.

PRIN. Hold! Do not utter such a strange wish. I experience too deep an aversion to such debasement; and if ever I could sink so low as to love, I should never forgive myself.

AGLA. Take care, madam! Love knows how to revenge himself for the contempt which is shown to him, and it may be . . . .

PRIN. Nay, nay, I defy him! The great power which people attribute to him is but an idle fancy, and an excuse used by weak hearts. They make him invincible so that they may not be blamed for their weakness.

CYN. Still, all the world acknowledges his power, and you see that the gods themselves are subject to his empire. We are told that Jupiter was not satisfied with loving once only, and that Diana herself, whose steps you affect to follow, was not ashamed to breathe sighs of love.

PRIN. All the beliefs of the world are mixed with error. The gods are not made as the vulgar imagine, and it is a want of respect to attribute human weaknesses to them.

SCENE II.—THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA, PHYLLIS, MORON.

AGLA. Come here, Moron, come and help us to defend love against the opinion of the Princess.

PRIN. A powerful ally for you, certainly.

MOR. Madam, I think that after what has happened to me, it is no longer possible to doubt the power of Love. I for a long time defied his arms, and like others laughed at him, but at last my pride has been humbled. Here you have a traitress (*pointing to* PHYLLIS) who has made me more gentle than a lamb. After this, who would hesitate to love? Since I love, others surely may.

CYN. What! Moron in love?

MOR. Even so.

CYN. And does he look for love in return?

MOR. Why not? Am I not handsome enough for that? I think my face pretty good, and as for elegant manners, the gods be thanked, I yield to none.

CYN. No doubt, it would be wrong to . . . .

SCENE III.—THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA, PHYLLIS, MORON, LYCAS.

LY. Madam, the prince, your father, is coming here to see you; he brings with him the Princes of Pylos and Ithaca, and also of Messenia.

PRIN. What does he mean, O heavens! by bringing them to me? Has he resolved on my destruction, and would he compel me to choose one of them?

SCENE IV.—IPHITAS, EURYALUS, ARISTOMENES, THEOCLES, THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA, PHYLLIS, MORON.

PRIN. My lord, allow me to say a few words before you make a declaration of the thoughts that you may have. There are two truths, my lord, as certain the one as the other, and for the existence of which I can answer: the first is that you have absolute power over me and that you could lay no command upon me that I would not blindly obey; the other that I look upon marriage as death, and that I cannot conquer this natural aversion. To give me a husband is to kill me; but your will is my first law, and my obedience to you is dearer than life itself. Now speak, my lord, ask freely what you wish.

IPHI. You have no reason to feel such alarm, my daughter, and you wrong me when you think I can be so bad a father as to do violence to your feelings and tyrannically use the power which Heaven has given me over you. I sincerely wish it were true, that your heart were capable of loving some one. My most earnest desire would then be gratified. If I have proposed the fêtes and sports we are now celebrating, it is only that I might attract here all the illustrious youths of Greece, and that among them you might be enabled to meet with one who would please you and determine your choice. I ask no other happiness from Heaven but that of seeing you married. To obtain this favour I have this morning again sacrificed to Venus; and if I interpret aright the language of the gods, she promised me a miracle. But, whatever may happen, I wish to act as a father who dearly cherishes his daughter. If you find a man whom you can love,

your choice shall be mine, and I shall consider neither the interest of state nor the advantages of alliance. If, on the other hand, your heart still remains untouched, I shall in no way force it. But at least accept kindly the respect paid to you, and do not force me to make excuses for your indifference. Treat these princes with the regard they have a right to expect; be grateful to them for the proofs of their zeal, and come to see this race in which they are to display their skill.

THEO. (*to the* PRINCESS). Every one will strive to carry off the prize of this chariot-race. But to say the truth, I care little for the victory, since your heart is not to be the reward of the conqueror.

ARIS. You are, madam, the only prize I set before my eyes. It is you that I think of disputing in these combats of skill, and I aspire now to gain this race because it would be one more degree of glory to bring me nearer to your heart.

EURY. As for me, madam, no such thought takes me there. I have all my life professed to love nobody, and in all the care I now take I have a very different end in view. I make no claim to the possession of your heart, and the honour of gaining the race is all I desire.

SCENE V.—THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA, PHYLLIS, MORON.

PRIN. Whence proceeds this unexpected pride, princesses? What do you say of this young prince? Did you observe the manner he assumed?

AGLA. He was somewhat haughty, it is true.

MOR. (*aside*). Ah! what a capital trick he has played her!

PRIN. Do you not think with me that it would be a pleasant thing to humble his pride, and to bring into subjection that boastful young heart?

CYN. You are accustomed to receive nothing but homage and adoration, and no doubt a compliment of the kind must take you rather by surprise.

PRIN. I acknowledge that it has a strange effect upon me, and I could heartily wish to find the means of crushing this pride. I had no great desire to be at the race, but

now I shall go on purpose, and shall do all I can to inspire him with love.

CYN. Take care, madam, the enterprise is dangerous; for when we wish to inspire people with love, we are in danger of feeling its power ourselves.

PRIN. Oh! you need not fear. I answer for myself.

SECOND INTERLUDE.

SCENE I.—PHYLLIS, MORON.

MOR. Stop with me, Phyllis.

PHYL. No; leave me to follow the others.

MOR. Ah! cruel one, if it were Tircis who asked you, you would be willing enough to stop.

PHYL. That may be; and I acknowledge that I am much happier with the one than with the other; for his voice delights me, whilst you tease me with your babbling. When you can sing as sweetly as he does, I promise that I will listen to you.

MOR. Ah! stop a few moments.

PHYL. I cannot.

MOR. For pity's sake.

PHYL. No! no!

MOR. (*holding* PHYLLIS *back*). I will not let you go.

PHYL. Indeed!

MOR. I only ask you to stop for one moment.

PHYL. Very well, I consent; but only upon one condition.

MOR. Which?

PHYL. That you do not speak at all.

MOR. Oh, Phyllis!

PHYL. Unless you promise, I will not stop with you.

MOR. Do you want me to . . . .

PHYL. Let me go.

MOR. Stop, then! Yes, let it be, I will not say a word.

PHYL. Mind you do not; for at the first word I run away.

MOR. Be it so. (*after many gestures*) Ah! Phyllis . . . . Why . . . .

(PHYLLIS *runs away.*)

SCENE II.—MORON.

She is gone; I could not catch her if I tried. It serves me right. If only I could sing, I should succeed much better. Most women nowadays are caught by a fine voice. They have brought music into fashion; everybody will have it, and the only way to be successful with them is to utter little songs and little verses. I must learn to sing, in order to be like others. That's right; here is the very man I want.

SCENE III.—A SATYR, MORON.

SAT. (*sings*). La, la, la!

MOR. Oh! Satyr my friend. You remember the promise you made me long ago? Teach me to sing, I pray you.

SAT. Willingly; but first listen to a song I have just composed.

MOR. (*aside*). He is so accustomed to singing that he cannot express himself otherwise. (*aloud*) Well, sing; I am all ears.

SAT. (*singing*). In a cage I was bearing . . . .

MOR. You said a song.

SAT. In a cage . . . .

MOR. A song that can be sung.

SAT. In a cage . . . .

MOR. A love song? The deuce!

SAT. (*sings*).

In a cage I was bearing away
Two tiny sparrows I'd taken,
When the dark forest boughs were shaken,
And Chloris, fresh as the day,
Flashed to my sweet surprise
Her face on my startled eyes.

"Ah!" sighed I, "poor sparrows," as fell the dart true,
"Those bright eyes full well know their conquests to make.
I'll tell you, poor birdies, for your comfort's sake,
He who has prisoned you, is a prisoner too."

(MORON *is not satisfied, and asks for a more passionate song which he had heard him sing a few days before.*)

SAT. (*sings*).

In your songs so sweet
Sing to my dear;
Tell, birds, how complete
The anguish I bear.—
Yet, birds, have a care
If with anger unsweet
She lists to your prayer;
Of the mourning for her that my heart must wear
Keep silence meet.

MOR. Ah! how pretty. Teach it me.
SAT. La, la, la, la!
MOR. La, la, la, la!
SAT. Si, si, si, si!
MOR. See, see! Go and see it yourself.*

BALLET.

(*The Satyr, angry, threatens* MORON; *other Satyrs come in and dance.*)

ACT III.

SCENE I.—THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA, PHYLLIS.

CYN. It is true, madam, that this young prince has displayed the greatest skill, and that his bearing there was surprising. He is the winner in the race; but I much doubt if when he went away his heart was as free as when he came: for you aimed such blows at him, that he could hardly defend himself. Without mentioning anything else, your graceful dancing and the sweetness of your voice had to-day power to charm the coldest hearts.

PRIN. There he is, speaking with Moron. We shall

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* SAT. Fa, fa, fa, fa!
MOR. Fat toi-même.

know of whom he is talking. Do not let us interrupt their conversation, but turn this way to meet them again.

SCENE II.—EURYALUS, ARBATES, MORON.

EURY. Ah! Moron, I confess I was perfectly enchanted. Never have so many charms met my ears and eyes. It is true that she is adorable at all times; but just then she was more so than ever. New graces had made her ten times more beautiful. Never had her face been adorned with more brilliant colour; never had her eyes been armed with more quick and piercing glances. The sweetness of her voice showed itself in a most charming air she condescended to sing; and the wonderful sounds she uttered went through my very soul, and held all my senses in an unutterable rapture. She afterwards showed a talent altogether divine, and her lovely feet traced upon the enamel of the soft turf such delightful figures, that they put me beyond myself, and held me by invisible bonds to the easy and graceful movements with which her whole body followed the changes of the harmony. In short, never was heart under more powerful emotion than mine, and more than twenty times I felt on the point of forgetting my resolution, of casting myself at her feet, and of making a sincere confession of the ardent love I feel for her.

MOR. Be very careful that you do no such thing. Believe me, my lord, you have found out the very best method in the world of succeeding, and I am much mistaken if you do not. Women are whimsical animals; we spoil them with our tenderness, and I really believe that we should see them run after us, were it not that we generally, with all our respect and submission, spoil them and make them proud.

ARB. My lord, here comes the Princess at a short distance from her attendants.

MOR. Be firm, go on as you have begun; I will go and see what she will say to me. In the meantime walk about here in these alleys without showing the least wish of joining her. If you speak to her, stop with her as short a time as possible.

SCENE III.—THE PRINCESS, MORON.

PRIN. You are friends, then, Moron, with the Prince of Ithaca?

MOR. Oh yes, madam, we have known each other for a very long time.

PRIN. How is it that he did not come forward, but turned another way when he saw me?

MOR. He is a strange man, and only likes to converse with his own thoughts.

PRIN. Were you there this afternoon when he paid me that compliment?

MOR. Yes, madam, I was, and I thought it rather impertinent, with all due respect to his princeship.

PRIN. Well, I can assure you, Moron, that his avoiding me has greatly astonished me, and that I have a great mind to humble his pride in order to make him love me.

MOR. Upon my word, madam, you would do well, and he richly deserves it; but all the same, I much doubt if you would ever succeed.

PRIN. Why not?

MOR. Why not? Because he is the proudest little fellow that you ever met with. He thinks that there is no one in the world who deserves to be compared with him, and that the earth is unworthy of being trodden by him.

PRIN. But say, Moron, has he not yet spoken of me?

MOR. No.

PRIN. Has he told you nothing about my dancing and singing?

MOR. No, not a word.

PRIN. This disregard is unbearable; I cannot support such strange haughtiness and such contempt for everything.

MOR. He neither loves nor values anyone but himself.

PRIN. There is nothing I would not attempt, to humble him to the utmost as he deserves.

MOR. There is no marble in our mountains more hard, more insensible than he is.

PRIN. Here he comes.

MOR. Just see how he passes by without taking the least notice of you.

PRIN. Pray, Moron, go and tell him that I am here, and force him to come and speak to me.

SCENE IV.—THE PRINCESS, EURYALUS, ARBATES, MORON.

MOR. (*going up to* EURYALUS *and whispering to him*). My lord, all is going on as it should. The Princess wishes you to go and speak to her; but mind that you continue as you have begun. Do not stay long with her, for fear of forgetting yourself.

PRIN. You are very solitary, my lord; it is strange to see you renounce our sex, and avoid at your age that gallantry which is the boast of men like you.

EURY. There is nothing so strange in this disposition, madam; other examples could be found, even without going very far off; you cannot blame, without condemning your own feelings, the resolution I have taken of never loving anybody.

PRIN. That is altogether a different thing; for what well becomes one sex does not always become the other. It is right for a woman to be insensible and to keep her heart free from the flames of love; but that which is a virtue in her becomes a crime in a man. As beauty is the portion of our sex, you cannot refrain from loving us, without robbing us of the homage which is our due, and without committing an offence which we all alike resent.

EURY. I do not see, madam, how those who themselves do not love, can be interested in offences of this kind.

PRIN. This has nothing to do with it, my lord; and although we may never care to love, we are always glad to be loved.

EURY. For my part, I do not think like you; and as I mean never to love, I should be sorry to be loved.

PRIN. But what can be your reason?

EURY. Oh! we must feel a certain obligation to those who love us, and I should be sorry to be ungrateful.

PRIN. So that, in order not to be ungrateful, you would love whoever loved you?

EURY. I do not say that, madam. I say truly, that I

should be sorry to be ungrateful; still, I had rather be so, than to love.

PRIN. But the person who loved you might be such that your heart . . . .

EURY. You are mistaken, madam; there is nothing capable of touching my heart. Liberty is the sole mistress I worship: and even if heaven were to put forth all its powers to form a perfect beauty, and should endue her with the most marvellous gifts, both of body and soul; even if it were to present me with a miracle of wit, skill, and charms, and that this miracle should love me with the utmost tenderness, I tell you frankly that I could not love her.

PRIN. (*aside*). Has ever anything like this been seen before!

MOR. (*aside to the* PRINCESS). Plague take the brute! How I should like to make him feel the weight of my fist!

PRIN. (*aside*). Such pride confounds me, and I feel quite beside myself with anger.

MOR. (*aside to the* PRINCE). Excellent, my lord; courage, it is succeeding admirably.

EURY. (*aside to* MORON). Ah! Moron, I can keep it up no longer. What terrible efforts I am compelled to make!

PRIN. (*to* EURYALUS). Your way of talking shows a most unheard-of insensibility.

EURY. It is thus that Heaven has made me. But, madam, I interrupt your walk, and the respect I owe you reminds me that you love solitude.

SCENE V.—THE PRINCESS, MORON.

MOR. Well, he is not behind you in hardness of heart, is he?

PRIN. Ah! I would willingly give all I possess in the world to triumph over him.

MOR. I have no doubt you would.

PRIN. Could you not help me in such an undertaking, Moron?

MOR. You know, madam, that I am wholly at your service.

PRIN. When you have an opportunity, speak of me to

him. Skilfully praise my person, and the advantages of my noble birth. Try, by giving him some hope, to make him change his mind. I give you leave to say whatever you like, in order to make him fall in love with me.

MOR. Trust to me.

PRIN. I have it very much at heart. I ardently wish him to love me.

MOR. There's no doubt that the little rascal is well made; his appearance is in his favour; he has a good face, and I think he would do very well for a young princess.

PRIN. In short, you may expect anything from me, Moron, if you can but succeed in making him lose his heart on my account.

MOR. Nothing is impossible. But, madam, suppose he should end by loving you, may I ask what you would do then?

PRIN. Oh! then I should delight in crushing his vanity to the utmost. I would punish his disdain by my coldness, and would make him endure all the cruelties I could think of.

MOR. He will never yield.

PRIN. Ah, Moron, we must make him yield.

MOR. No, believe me, I know him too well; my labour would be in vain.

PRIN. However, we must try every means to discover if his heart is altogether insensible. I will go and speak to him. A thought has just come into my head, and I will act upon it.

THIRD INTERLUDE.

SCENE I.—TIRCIS, PHYLLIS.

PHYL. Come along, Tircis, let them go; and tell me your grief, as you so well can do. Your eyes have been speaking to me for a long time; but it gives me more pleasure to hear your voice.

TIR. *(sings).*

You hear me, alas! without feeling the smart,
And I suffer still. O fair without peer,
I touch thine ear,
Without touching thy heart.

PHYL. Believe me, it is already something to please the ear, and time brings many things to pass. Sing, however, some of the new songs you have composed for me.

SCENE II.—MORON, PHYLLIS, TIRCIS.

MOR. Ah! ah! I have caught you, cruel one; you leave the others in order to come and listen to my rival!

PHYL. Yes, I leave them for that. I tell you again, I am happy with him, and one lends a willing ear to lovers who have the gift of complaining as agreeably as he does. Why do you not sing like him? I would listen to you with pleasure also.

MOR. Although I cannot sing, I can do something else, and when . . . .

PHYL. Be silent. I want to hear him. Tell me, Tircis, all you wish to say.

MOR. Ah! cruel one . . . .

PHYL. Be quiet, I say, or I shall get angry.

TIR. (*sings*).

Oh meadows enamelled, and trees which have lost
Your rich wealth of beauty, by keen winter frost;
Your flowered glories and sunlight free
Will return with Spring and her jewelled rain:
But my soul, ah! shall never again
Know the joy that for ever is lost to me.

MOR. 'Sdeath, why have I no voice? Ah! Nature, why did you not give me the power of singing like other men?

PHYL. Indeed, Tircis, nothing can be more delightful, and you are superior to all your rivals.

MOR. But why can I not sing? Have I not a chest, a throat, and a tongue like others? Yes, yes, I will, I will sing also, and show you that love can conquer everything. Here, listen to a song I composed for you.

PHYL. Yes. I willingly listen to you, were it only because of the rarity of the performance.

MOR. Courage, Moron! One only wants confidence.

(*Sings.*)

Thy harshness accursed
Will make my heart burst!
O Phyllis! my wounded
Heart fails. Ah! me, I cry,
Will it make you the fatter
To make me thus die?

Bravo! Moron.

PHYL. Very good indeed. But, Moron, I wish I could boast of some lover who died for me. It is a pleasure I have not yet had. I think I should love with all my heart a man who would die of love for me.

MOR. You would love a man who would die for you?

PHYL. Yes.

MOR. That's the only thing wanting to please you?

PHYL. The only thing.

MOR. Well, it is decided. I will show you that I can kill myself when I like.

TIR. (*sings*).

Take heart, brave Moron,
And like a generous lover
Die . . . .

MOR. (*to* TIRCIS). Please to mind your own business, and allow me to kill myself after my own fashion. There, I will shame all lovers. (*to* PHYLLIS) Look, I am not a man to make so much ado. You see this dagger; notice well how I will pierce my heart with it . . . . I am your servant. No such fool!

PHYL. Come, Tircis, come, and tell the echoes all you have sung to me.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—THE PRINCESS, EURYALUS, MORON.

PRIN. Prince, since until now we have shown the same feelings, and as Heaven seems to have inspired us both with the same fondness for liberty and the same aversion to love, I am glad to open my heart to you and to consult you in confidence on a change which will surprise you. I

have always looked upon marriage as a most dreadful thing, and I had vowed rather to abandon life itself than ever to lose that liberty so precious to me; but in one moment all these resolutions have been dispersed. I was struck to-day by the worth of a certain prince, and suddenly and, as it were, by a miracle, my heart became sensible to the passion I had always despised. I at once found reasons to support the change; and I can strengthen them with my desire of yielding to the earnest appeals of a father and the wishes of a whole nation: but to tell you the truth, I feel anxious to hear what your opinion is, and to know whether you will condemn or approve the determination I have made of taking a husband.

EURY. Your choice may be such, madam, that I shall be forced to approve it.

PRIN. Who in your opinion do you think I may choose?

EURY. I could tell you if I had any part in your secret thoughts, but as I have not, I shall be careful not to answer your question.

PRIN. Try and guess, just to see; name some one.

EURY. I should be afraid of making a mistake.

PRIN. But still, for whom would you wish me to declare myself?

EURY. I know well, it is true, whom I should wish you to choose: but I ought to know your thoughts before I explain myself.

PRIN. Well, prince, I will tell you. I am sure you will approve my choice; and in order not to keep you in suspense, know that the Prince of Messenia has won my heart.

EURY. (*aside*). O heavens!

PRIN. (*aside to* MORON). My scheme has been successful, Moron; see how disturbed he seems.

MOR. (*to the* PRINCESS). Well done, madam. (*to the* PRINCE) Take courage, my lord. (*to the* PRINCESS) He's caught. (*to the* PRINCE) Don't be downcast.

PRIN. (*to* EURYALUS). Do you not think that I am right, and that this prince possesses all the virtues one can desire?

MOR. (*aside to the* PRINCE). Recover yourself and answer.

PRIN. How is it, prince, that you do not say a word, and seem thunderstruck?

EURY. I am, indeed; and I wonder, madam, that Heaven

could have formed two hearts in everything so much alike as ours are; two hearts in which the same feelings reigned supreme, which showed at the same time a resolution of defying love, and which at the same moment have shown an equal facility in losing the character of insensibility. For, madam, since your example authorizes me to speak out, I will not hide from you that love to-day has conquered my heart, and that one of the princesses, your cousins, the amiable and lovely Aglanta, has overthrown with one glance all the projects that I in my pride had formed. I am delighted, madam, that, alike defeated, we cannot reproach each other. I have no doubt that, as I approve to the utmost the choice you have made, you will in the same way approve mine. This miracle must be made known to everybody, and we ought not to delay making ourselves happy. For my part, madam, I beg you to employ your influence so that I may obtain her I desire, and I pray you kindly to allow me to go at once and ask her of the prince, your father.

MOR. (*aside to* EURYALUS). Well and bravely done.

SCENE II.—THE PRINCESS, MORON.

PRIN. Ah! Moron, this is too much; and this unexpected blow triumphs over all my stedfastness.

MOR. It is true that it is a surprising turn of fortune, and I really thought at first that your stratagem had had the effect you wished.

PRIN. Ah! It is enough to drive me to despair to see that another has conquered a heart I wished to subdue.

SCENE III.—THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, MORON.

PRIN. Princess, I have one thing to ask of you, which you must absolutely grant me. The Prince of Ithaca loves you, and intends to ask you of my father.

AGLA. The Prince of Ithaca, madam!

PRIN. Yes. He has just told me so himself, and has, moreover, asked my help to obtain you. But I conjure you to reject his proposal, and not to listen to what he would fain tell you.

AGLA. But, madam, if it be true that the prince really loves me, why, since you have no wish to marry him yourself, will you not allow . . . .

PRIN. No, Aglanta; I beseech you to grant me that favour and to consent, since I have not had the power to conquer him myself, that I may at least deprive him of the joy of obtaining you.

AGLA. Madam, I am bound to obey you, but I should think the conquest of such a heart no contemptible victory.

PRIN. No, no, he shall not have the pleasure of braving me with impunity.

SCENE IV.—THE PRINCESS, ARISTOMENES, AGLANTA, MORON.

ARIS. Madam, at your feet I come to thank Love for crowning my happiness, and to show you by my joy, the gratitude I feel for the surprising goodness with which you deign to favour the most humble of your captives.

PRIN. What is it you mean?

ARIS. The Prince of Ithaca, madam, has just now assured me that your heart has had the goodness to declare itself in my favour, in respect to that glorious choice which all Greece demands.

PRIN. Did he tell you that he had it from me?

ARIS. Yes, madam.

PRIN. He is thoughtless, and you, prince, rather too credulous, to believe so hastily what he told you. Such news, it seems to me, merited well a slower belief; and even if I had told it you myself, you might have doubted.

ARIS. If I have been too ready in persuading myself . . . .

PRIN. Pray, my lord, let us end this conversation; and if you would oblige me, allow me to enjoy a few moments' solitude.

SCENE V.—THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, MORON.

PRIN. Ah! how cruelly Heaven uses me in this affair! At least, princess, remember the request I made you.

AGLA. I have already told you, madam, that you shall be obeyed.

SCENE VI.—THE PRINCESS, MORON.

MOR. But, madam, if he loved you, you would not have him; and yet you will not let him be another's. This is acting the part of the dog in the manger.

PRIN. No, I cannot bear the thought of seeing him happy with another; and if such a thing happened, I believe I should die with vexation.

MOR. Come, madam, better confess it at once. You would like him to be yours; and it is easy to see in all you do that you love this young prince.

PRIN. I! I love him! O heavens! I love him! How dare you be insolent enough to utter such words? Leave my presence this instant, and never let me see your face again.

MOR. Madam . . . .

PRIN. Begone, I say, or I will force you to leave in a different manner.

MOR. (*aside*). Upon my word, her heart has her share of it, and . . . .

(*He meets a look from the* PRINCESS, *which makes him retire.*)

SCENE VII.—THE PRINCESS (*alone*).

What unknown emotion has taken possession of my heart, and what secret uneasiness has suddenly come to disturb the quiet of my soul? Is it what I have just been told; and do I love this young prince without knowing it? Ah! if it were possible, I should never forgive myself. But it cannot be, and I feel sure I can never love him. What! could I be guilty of such baseness? With the utmost indifference I have seen the whole world at my feet; respect, homage, submission, have never touched my soul; and now pride and disdain have triumphed over me! I have despised all those who have loved me, in order to love the only one who despises me! No, no, it cannot be. There is no reason whatever for my loving him. But if this is not love, what then can it be? and whence comes this poison which runs through my veins and leaves me no rest? Away from my heart, whatever thou art, thou treacherous enemy that hidest thyself there! Attack

me openly, and appear before my eyes under the most frightful shape, so that with my darts and arrows I may rid myself of thee.

FOURTH INTERLUDE.

Scene I.—The Princess (*alone*).

O you charming people who have power with the sweetness of your songs to allay the greatest troubles, come near, I pray you, and try to soothe with your music the sorrow I feel.

Scene II.—Princess, Climène, Phyllis.

(Climène *and* Phyllis *sing.*)

Cli. Dear Phyllis, tell me, what thinkest thou of love?
Phyl. Thyself, what thinkest thou, friend of my soul?
Cli. They say its flame is like sun without rain,
And one suffers, in loving, a mortal pain.
Phyl. They tell me the passion's sent straight from above,
And a day without love is a day without light.
Cli. To which of the two shall we pay deference?
Phyl. Evil or good, which has the preference?
Both. Let us love, ah! 'tis the only means
Which shall teach us of love's ways to speak.
Phyl. Chloris still praises Love and his joys.
Cli. Amarante weeps for him sorrowful tears.
Phyl. If, then, with such torment he fills every heart,
How comes it one yields to love without fears?
Cli. If this flame, my Phyllis, is so full of charms,
Why then to our hearts is forbidden such peace?
Phyl. To which of the two shall we pay deference?
Cli. Evil or good, which has the preference?
Both. Let us love, ah! 'tis the only means
Which shall teach us of love's ways to speak.

Prin. (*interrupting them*). Finish alone, if you please. I do not know how to live in peace; and though your songs are sweet, they only increase my sorrow.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—IPHITAS, EURYALUS, MORON.

MOR. (*to* IPHITAS). Indeed, my lord, I speak the plain truth; I have become a disgraced favourite through it. I had to decamp as fast as I could, and you never in your life witnessed such a sudden burst of passion.

IPHI. Ah! prince, what thanks I shall owe to your device, if through it you have found a way to her heart!

EURY. Whatever you may have heard about it, my lord, for my part, I dare not as yet trust myself to this delightful hope: but if it is not too presumptuous in me to aspire to the honour of your alliance; if my person, my kingdom . . . .

IPHI. Prince, cease these compliments. You are for me all that a father could wish; and if you have the heart of my daughter, you have everything.

SCENE II.—THE PRINCESS, IPHITAS, EURYALUS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA, MORON.

PRIN. Heavens! whom do I behold here!

IPHI. (*to* EURYALUS). Yes, I highly value the honour of your alliance, and I give my full consent to your demand.

PRIN. (*to* IPHITAS). My lord, I throw myself at your feet to beg of you the greatest favour. You have always treated me with the utmost tenderness; I owe you more for your constant kindness than for my birth; but if ever you had any love for me, I ask you to-day for the truest proof you can give me of it. My lord, do not grant the request of this prince; do not allow the Princess Aglanta to be united to him.

IPHI. But why should you oppose their union, my daughter?

PRIN. Because I hate the prince, and will, if I can, foil his designs.

IPHI. Do you hate him, my child?

PRIN. Yes, with all my heart.

IPHI. And what has he done to you?

PRIN. He has despised me.

IPHI. But how?

PRIN. He did not think me worthy of his love.

IPHI. But what offence can this give you, since you will accept no one?

PRIN. That has nothing to do with it. He should have wooed me like the others, and have given me at least the privilege of refusing him. His love for Aglanta is an offence to me; and it is a deep humiliation to me that in my presence, in the midst of your court, he should have admired any other but me.

IPHI. But why do you concern yourself so much about him?

PRIN. Because, my lord, I will revenge myself for his disdain; and as I know that he violently loves Aglanta, I wish, with your help, to prevent him from being happy with her.

IPHI. You seem to care very much about it.

PRIN. Yes, my lord; for if he obtains what he asks, you will see me die before your eyes.

IPHI. Come, come, daughter, acknowledge frankly the truth. The prince's merit has opened your eyes, and you love him, whatever you may say to the contrary.

PRIN. I, my lord!

IPHI. Yes, you love him.

PRIN. I love him, do you say? Do you impute such baseness to me? Oh, heavens! how great is my misfortune! Can I hear you say such a thing without dying? How unhappy I am, that I should now be so suspected! Oh! if it were anyone but you, my lord, who imputed such a thing to me, I do not know what I might do!

IPHI. Very well, you do not love him. You hate him—it is a settled thing—and I am willing, in order to please you, that he should not marry the Princess Aglanta.

PRIN. Ah! my lord, you give me life!

IPHI. But, to prevent him from ever being hers, you must take him for yourself.

PRIN. You are laughing, my lord; this is not what he desires.

EURY. Forgive me, madam, I am rash enough to aspire to your hand, and I take to witness the prince, your father,

if it was not you I asked of him. I have deceived you too long. I must speak out; and although you may take advantage of it against me, I must tell you the real feelings of my heart. I have never loved anyone but you. It is to you, to you only, that I owe the loss of this insensibility of which I have always boasted, and all I said to you was only a feint, which I did not follow up without doing the utmost violence to my feelings. It must soon have ceased, and I only wonder that I could keep it up as I have for half a day; in short, I felt as if I could have died whilst disguising my feelings to you, and never did a heart suffer a constraint equal to mine. If by so doing I have offended you, madam, I am ready to die to avenge you; you have but to speak the word, and my hand will esteem it a glory to execute the decree you pronounce.

PRIN. No, no, prince, I do not take it ill that you have deceived me, and I much prefer that all you have said to me should be a feint than that it should be the truth.

IPHI. So that, daughter, you are willing to accept the prince for your husband?

PRIN. My lord, I hardly know, as yet, what I wish. Pray give me time to think, and pity a little the confusion I am in.

IPHI. Prince, you understand what this means, and you may act accordingly.

EURY. I shall wait as long as you please, madam, for the decree which decides my fate; and if it condemns me to death, I shall obey without murmuring.

IPHI. Come, Moron, this is a day of peace, and I restore you to favour with the Princess.

MOR. My lord, I shall be a better courtier for the future, and I shall take good care never to say again what I think.

SCENE III.—IPHITAS, ARISTOMENES, THEOCLES, THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA, MORON.

IPHI. (*to the Princes of* MESSENIA *and* PYLOS). I fear, my lords, that the choice of my daughter is not in your favour: but here are two princesses who can well comfort you for this small misfortune.

ARIS. My lord, we can yield to circumstances; and if these lovely princesses do not despise the vows which have been refused by another, we will, through them, still aspire to the honour of your alliance.

SCENE IV.—IPHITAS, THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA, PHYLLIS, EURYALUS, ARISTOMENES, THEOCLES, MORON.

PHYL. (*to* IPHITAS). My lord, the goddess Venus has proclaimed everywhere the change that has taken place in the Princess's heart. All the shepherds and shepherdesses show their joy by dances and songs; and if you do not despise such a spectacle, the public joy will show itself everywhere.

FIFTH INTERLUDE.

Oh use better, ye proud fair,
Your power of all hearts moving:
Love, ye lovely maids; I swear
Our hearts were made for loving.
However hardly they are steeled,
In time will come surrender;
For nothing is that will not yield
To love that's pure and tender.

Dream of the coming hour's delight,
The pleasure of devotion;
Hearts of life know not the light
Who know not love's emotion.
However hardly they are steeled,
In time will come surrender;
For nothing is that will not yield
To love that's pure and tender.

DON JUAN;

OR, THE FEAST OF THE STATUE.

(DON JUAN; OU LE FESTIN DE PIERRE.)

Molière had finished 'Tartuffe' in the early part of 1664. The first three acts had been played in May, on the sixth day of the Fêtes de Versailles, and the whole before the Prince de Condé once. But owing to the storm of passions to which it gave rise, Molière found it impossible to bring it upon the stage. Then he wrote 'Don Juan,' a counterpart of 'Tartuffe,' more bold, and more philosophic; and this play was never forbidden, for in it he attacked an abstract idea, and not that particular class who prevented the representations of 'Tartuffe.' But on this class he revenges himself in the fifth act, where Don Juan speaks to Sganarelle of becoming a hypocrite for his own comfort.

It was acted for the first time on the 15th of February, 1665, Molière taking the part of Sganarelle.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

DON JUAN, *son to* DON LOUIS.

DON CARLOS, DON ALONZO, } *brothers to* DONNA ELVIRA.

DON LOUIS, *father to* DON JUAN.

THE STATUE OF THE COMMANDANT.

GUZMAN, *equerry to* DONNA ELVIRA.

FRANCISQUE, *a poor man.*

PIERROT, *a countryman.*

SGANARELLE, LA VIOLETTE, RAGOTIN, } *servants to* DON JUAN.

MR. DIMANCHE, *a tradesman.*

LA RAMÉE, *a bravo.*

DON JUAN'S *followers.*

DON CARLOS *and* DON ALONZO'S *followers.*

A GHOST.

DONNA ELVIRA, *wife to* DON JUAN.

CHARLOTTE, MATHURINE, } *countrywomen.*

The scene is in Sicily.

DON JUAN;

OR, THE FEAST OF THE STATUE.

ACT I.

Scene I.—Sganarelle, Guzman.

Sgan. *(holding a snuff-box in his hand)*. Whatever Aristotle and the whole body of philosophers may say, nothing can be compared to snuff.* All honest folks are fond of it, and whoever lives without snuff is not worthy to live. It not only exhilarates and clears the human brain, but it is also conducive to virtue, and by it one learns to behave like a gentleman. For just notice, as soon as we take to it, how obliging we become towards everybody, and how delighted we are to offer it right and left, wherever we may be. We do not even wait to be asked for it, but forestall people's wishes, so true it is that snuff inspires all who take it with feelings of generosity and disinterestedness. But enough of this matter; let us return to what we were saying. So, my dear Guzman, our departure having taken Donna Elvira, your mistress, by surprise, she is come in search of us, because her heart, which my master has too thoroughly won, cannot live at peace, you say, away from him. Well, shall I tell you in your ear what I think? I am greatly

* Tobacco, which had been introduced into France in 1560, by Jean Nicot, ambassador of Francis II., at the court of Madrid, had given rise to many disputes among the doctors. These still existed in Molière's time, and he no doubt in this passage laughed at those who attributed to it the most wonderful power, and made of it a universal panacea.

afraid that her love will be but ill repaid, that her journey to this town will produce little fruit, and that it would have been just as well for you had you never moved from where you were.

GUZ. But have you any reason for saying all this? Tell me, I pray you, Sganarelle, why you should have such an ill-omened fear? Has your master spoken to you on that subject? Has he told you if any coldness towards us forced him to go away?

SGAN. Not so. But I know pretty well how the land lies; and although he has not yet taken me into his confidence, I could almost swear that things are tending that way. I may be mistaken, of course; but yet, experience has taught me to guess many things.

GUZ. What! can this unexpected departure be an act of infidelity on the part of Don Juan? Can he do such an injury to the pure love of Donna Elvira?

SGAN. It isn't that, exactly, but he is still young, and has not the courage to . . . .

GUZ. A man of his rank can commit such a base action!

SGAN. Oh yes, his rank, to be sure! A capital reason you give me there; as if that would prevent him doing what he likes!

GUZ. But he is engaged by the holy bonds of matrimony.

SGAN. Ah! my poor Guzman, my good friend, you do not know yet, believe me, the sort of man that Don Juan is.

GUZ. Truly, I do not know what kind of man he may be, if he could commit such a dastardly action; and I do not understand how, after having shown so much love and impatience, after such deep homage, such vows, such sighs and tears, such passionate letters, such ardent protestations, such reiterated oaths, and such ravings; in short, such outbursts, which carried him so far as to force the sacred precincts of a convent, in order to get Donna Elvira into his power—I cannot understand, I repeat, how, after all this, he can be base enough to fail in his engagement.

SGAN. Can you not? Then I can; and, if you knew the man as I do, you would find it no hard matter to believe. I do not say for certain that he has changed towards Donna Elvira: I have no proof as yet. You know that I was ordered to start before him, and we have had no talk

together since his arrival; but it is as a kind of warning that I tell you, *inter nos*, that you see in Don Juan, my master, one of the greatest scoundrels that ever trod the earth; a madman, a dog, a demon, a Turk, a heretic who believes neither in heaven, saints, God, nor devil; who spends his life like a regular brute, an epicurean hog; a true Sardanapalus, who shuts up his ears against all the admonitions that can be made to him, and who laughs at everything we believe in. You say that he has married your mistress; believe me, in order to satisfy his passion, he would have done more, and married along with her not only yourself, but her dog and her cat into the bargain. A marriage is nothing to him: it is the grand snare he makes use of to catch the fair sex. He is a wholesale marriage-monger; gentlewomen, young girls, middle-class women, peasant lasses, nothing is either too hot or too cold for him; and if I were to tell you the names of all those he has married in different places, the chapter would last from now till midnight. You seem surprised, and you grow pale; yet this is but a mere outline of the man, and to make it a finished portrait we should require many more vigorous touches. Let it be sufficient that the wrath of Heaven must sooner or later make an end of him. He cannot escape; and it would be better for me to belong to the devil than to him. I am the witness of so much evil that I could wish him to be I don't know where. But if a great lord is also a wicked man, it is a terrible thing. I must be faithful to him, whatever I may think; in me fear takes the place of zeal, curbs my feelings, and often compels me to applaud what I most detest.—Here he is, coming for a walk in this palace; let us part. But, listen: I have told you this in all frankness, and it has slipped rather quickly out of my mouth; but, if anything of what I have said should reach his ears, I would stoutly maintain that you have told a lie.

(*Exit* GUZMAN.)

SCENE II.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

JU. Who was that man talking with you? He looks very much like honest Guzman, the servant of Donna Elvira.

SGAN. You are not very far from the truth.

JU. What! is it he?

SGAN. He himself.

JU. How long has he been in this place?

SGAN. Since last night.

JU. And what is it brings him here?

SGAN. I think you can pretty well guess what makes him anxious.

JU. Our departure, no doubt.

SGAN. The good old man is quite shocked at it, and he was asking me the cause of it.

JU. And you answered?

SGAN. That you had told me nothing about it.

JU. Good; but tell me what are your thoughts on the subject. What do you imagine to be the cause?

SGAN. I? Without any thought of wronging you, I fancy you are on with a new love.

JU. You fancy so?

SGAN. Yes.

JU. Upon my word, you are not mistaken; and I may as well tell you that a new beauty has driven Donna Elvira from my thoughts.

SGAN. I thought so! I know my Don Juan thoroughly, and I know that his heart is for ever roving. It likes to go from bondage to bondage, and cares not to stop in one spot for any length of time.

JU. And do you not think that I am quite right to do so?

SGAN. Oh! sir . . . .

JU. Well! what? Go on.

SGAN. Of course you are right. If you wish it, there is nothing to say against it. But, supposing you did not wish it, maybe, it would be another thing altogether.

JU. Well, I give you leave to speak, and to tell me your opinion.

SGAN. In that case I will tell you frankly, sir, that I do not approve of your goings on: and that I think it very wrong in you to make love right and left, as you do.

JU. What! would you have a man bind himself to the first girl he falls in love with, say farewell to the world

for her sake, and have no eyes for anyone else? A fine thing, to be sure, to pride oneself upon the false honour of being faithful, to lose oneself in one passion for ever, and to be blind from our youth up to all the other beautiful women who can captivate our gaze! No, no; constancy is the share of fools. Every beautiful woman has a right to charm us, and the privilege of having been the first to be loved should not deprive the others of the just pretensions which the whole sex has over our hearts. As for me, beauty delights me wherever I meet with it, and I am easily overcome by the gentle violence with which it hurries us along. It matters not if I am already engaged: the love I have for a fair one cannot make me unjust towards the others; my eyes are always open to merit, and I pay the homage and tribute nature claims. Whatever may have taken place before, I cannot refuse my love to any of the lovely women I behold; and, as soon as a handsome face asks it of me, if I had ten thousand hearts I would give them all away. The first beginnings of love have, besides, indescribable charms, and the true pleasure of love consists in its variety. It is a most captivating delight to reduce by a hundred means the heart of a young beauty; to see day by day the gradual progress one makes; to combat with transport, tears, and sighs, the shrinking modesty of a heart unwilling to yield; and to force, inch by inch, all the little obstacles she opposes to our passion; to overcome the scruples upon which she prides herself, and to lead her, step by step, where we would bring her. But, once we have succeeded, there is nothing more to wish for; all the attraction of love is over, and we should fall asleep in the tameness of such a passion, unless some new object came to awake our desires and present to us the attractive perspective of a new conquest. In short, nothing can surpass the pleasure of triumphing over the resistance of a beautiful maiden; and I have in this the ambition of conquerors, who go from victory to victory, and cannot bring themselves to put limits to their longings. There is nothing that can restrain my impetuous yearnings. I have a heart big enough to be in love with the whole world; and, like Alexander, I could wish for other spheres to which I could extend my conquests.

SGAN. Mercy on me! How you talk! One would think you had learnt all this by heart. You speak like a book.

JU. And what have you to say against it?

SGAN. Upon my word, I have to say . . . . I don't know what I have to say; for you twist things about in such a manner that you almost make me believe you are right, whilst it is certain that you are wrong. I had the most striking arguments in my head, but your speech has scattered them all to the winds. But never mind; another time I shall put down my thoughts in writing, in order to answer you.

JU. You will do well.

SGAN. But, sir, does the permission you have given me to speak out, go so far as to allow me to say that I am somewhat shocked at the life you lead?

JU. How? What kind of life is it I lead?

SGAN. A very good one. But, for instance, to see you marry every month as you do . . . .

JU. Can there be anything more pleasant?

SGAN. True, I understand that it must be pleasant enough, and very amusing, I daresay. I should rather like it myself, if there was no harm in it; but, sir, to trifle with a sacred mystery, and . . . .

JU. There, there! It is a thing that rests between Heaven and me, and we are pretty sure to come to some understanding together without your troubling your head about it.

SGAN. Upon my word, sir, I have always heard it said that it is a sorry jest to jest about Heaven, and that free-thinkers never come to a good end.

JU. Pooh! you old simpleton. Have I not told you that I do not like retailers of remonstrances?

SGAN. Nor is it to you that I speak;—Heaven forbid! You know fully what you are about, and if you believe in nothing, you have your reasons; but there are a number of young puppies in the world who are free-thinkers without knowing why or wherefore, only because they think it becomes them. If I had a master like that, I should tell him to his face, "How dare you tempt Heaven as you do, and are you not afraid of laughing at the most

sacred things? It becomes you well, little pigmy that you are (I am speaking to the master I mentioned), it becomes you well to try and jest at all that mankind reveres! Do you think that because you are of noble birth; because you wear a fair curly wig, have feathers in your hat, and a gold-laced coat and flame-coloured ribbons (I do not speak to you, but to the other),—do you think, I say, that you are any the wiser for all this: that you are at liberty to do whatever you please; and that we are afraid of speaking the truth to you? Learn from me, your own servant, that, sooner or later, Heaven punishes impious men; that a bad life leads to a bad end; and that . . . ."

JU. Peace!

SGAN. Why, what's the matter?

JU. The matter is, that I want you to know that a certain young beauty has captivated my heart, and that, attracted by her charms, I have followed her here.

SGAN. And have you no fear, sir, about the death of that commandant you killed six months ago?

JU. What fear can I have? Did I not kill him properly?

SGAN. Oh yes, very properly; it could not have been better done, and he would be wrong to complain.

JU. The affair has been hushed up, you know.

SGAN. Yes, but perhaps not the resentment of relatives and friends; and . . . .

JU. Oh! what need is there for us to trouble ourselves about the harm that may come; let us rather think of what brings pleasure. The person I speak to you of is a young betrothed, the most bewitching in the world, who was brought here by the man she is going to marry. I met them by chance three or four days before they set out on their journey. I never saw two people so fond of each other, and who showed deeper love. The real tenderness of their mutual affection moved me. I felt wounded to the heart, and my love began by jealousy. Yes, I could not bear to see them so happy together, and vexation kindled my desire; I pictured to myself in glowing colours the charm there would be in spoiling their good understanding, and in destroying a union so offensive to the susceptibility of my heart. But until

now, all my efforts have been unavailing, and I must have recourse to the last remedy. This intended husband is to take his betrothed in a boat on the sea to-day. Without speaking to you about it, I have got everything ready to gratify my love. I have a small boat ready, and have engaged a few men with the assistance of whom it will be easy for me to carry off the fair beauty.

SGAN. Ah! sir . . . .

JU. Eh?

SGAN. You are quite right, and are acting as you should do. There is nothing in the world like gratifying one's wishes.

JU. Get ready, then, to come with me, and be careful to bring my arms, so that . . . . (*seeing* DONNA ELVIRA) Ah! what an unpleasant meeting. You traitor! you did not tell me that she was here.

SGAN. You did not ask me, sir.

JU. Has she lost her senses not to have changed her dress, and to come to this place in her country clothes?

SCENE III.—DONNA ELVIRA, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

ELV. Will you do me the favour, Don Juan, to know me again? and may I hope that you will at least deign to turn your eyes this way?

JU. I must acknowledge, madam, that my surprise is great, and that I did not expect you here.

ELV. Yes, I see well enough that you did not, and you show your surprise in a very different way from what I expected; it convinces me altogether of what I refused to believe. I wonder at my own simplicity, and at the weakness of my heart in doubting a treachery so strengthened by appearances. I have been good enough, or rather I should say senseless enough, to try and deceive myself, and to take pains to contradict the testimony of my eyes and judgment. My own tenderness sought for reasons to excuse the growing coldness I noticed in you, and I manufactured a hundred excuses to justify your sudden departure, and to clear you from the crime of which my common sense accused you. In vain, day after day, did my too well founded suspicions reappear; I was deaf to the

warning voice which made you appear guilty before me. I cherished with pleasure a thousand foolish fancies with which my heart strove to find you innocent, but it is all over: this reception tells me that doubt is no longer possible, and the look with which you received me has told me much more than I ever wished to know. However, I should be glad to hear from you what has caused your departure. Speak, Don Juan, I beseech you, and let me hear how you can justify yourself.

JU. Madam, here is Sganarelle, who knows why I left.

SGAN. (*aside to* DON JUAN). I, sir? I know nothing about it, if you please.

ELV. Well! Sganarelle, speak; it signifies little to me from whom I hear his reasons.

JU. (*making signs to* SGANARELLE *to come forward*). Now, come, speak to this lady.

SGAN. (*aside to* DON JUAN). Sir! what can you want me to say?

ELV. Come nearer, since he will have it so, and tell me the cause of such a sudden journey.

JU. Will you not answer?

SGAN. (*aside to* DON JUAN). I have nothing to answer; you are laughing at your humble servant, sir.

JU. I will have you give an answer.

SGAN. Madam . . . .

ELV. What is it?

SGAN. (*turning towards his master*). Sir . . . .

JU. (*threatening him*). If . . . .

SGAN. Madam,—conquerors, Alexander and the other worlds, are the cause of our departure. (*to* DON JUAN) This is really all I can say, sir.

ELV. Will you be kind enough, Don Juan, to explain what all this means?

JU. To tell you the truth, madam . . . .

ELV. Ah! how little you, a courtier accustomed to this sort of thing, know how to defend yourself! I really pity the confusion you are in. Why do you not assume a noble effrontery? Why do you not swear that your feelings are unchanged, that you love me still with unequalled love, and that nothing can ever part you from

me? Why do you not say that an affair of the greatest importance forced you to leave me without your having time to tell me of it; that much against your wish, you will have to stop here for a short time, and that the best thing I can do is to go back, with the assurance that you will follow me as soon as possible,—for I may rest assured that you long to be with me again; and that you suffer when far away from me the tortures of a body separated from its soul? This is how you should excuse yourself, instead of losing countenance as you do.

JU. I confess it, madam, that I have no talent for dissimulation, and that my heart is sincere. I will not tell you that I have still the same feelings towards you, and that I long to follow you, since it is evident that I only left in order to avoid you; not, however, because of the reasons you imagine, but simply from pure conscientious motives, and because I believed that with you I could live no longer without sin. I have had scruples, madam; I have thought within myself that in order to marry you I had forced you from the seclusion of a convent, that you had broken the vows by which you were otherwise engaged, and that Heaven is very jealous of such things. Repentance seized me, and I dreaded the wrath of Heaven. I feared that after all our marriage was but a disguised adultery which would bring upon us some calamity, and that my duty was to try and forget you, and thereby to give you an opportunity of returning to your first chains. Would you wish, madam, to oppose such a holy resolution, and by keeping you that I should bring upon my head some unpleasant business with Heaven? That for . . . .

ELV. Ah, villain! It is now that I really understand you; but, for my misfortune, when it is too late, and when such knowledge can only drive me to despair. But be sure that your crime will not remain unpunished, and that this very Heaven you dare to jest with, will avenge me for your perfidy.

JU. Sganarelle, Heaven!

SGAN. Heaven indeed! as if we cared for that!

JU. Madam . . . .

ELV. It is enough. I will hear no more: and I even reproach myself for having heard too much. It is a mean-

ness impossible to a brave heart to bear with the too great exposure of its shame. Prompt decision is its only course. Do not expect me to forget myself in reproaches and insults,—no, my anger cannot spend itself in empty words,—I reserve all its power for revenge. I repeat it, Heaven will punish you for the wrong you do me; and if Heaven has no terror for you, at least fear the anger of an injured woman!

Scene IV.—Don Juan, Sganarelle.

Sgan. (*aside*). If he would only be seized with remorse!

Ju. (*after musing awhile*). I must go and see after this new love business. (*Exit.*)

Sgan. (*alone*). Ah! what an abominable master I am forced to serve!

ACT II.

Scene I.—Don Juan, Charlotte, Pierrot.

Char. Lucky job, Pierrot, thee wast there just to the very nick o' time.

Pier. My wigs an' that I was! 'Twas the very nighest thing in the world that they had'n both abin drownded.

Char. 'Twas the storm, I s'pose, 'is mornin 'at turned 'em over into the sea.

Pier. There, now; you've agot it, Charlotte, an' I'll tell'ee right on end all about it; I spied 'em out the first, and as they do say, "first spy first catch." Well, then, we was down to the baich, I an' the girt Lucas, an' we was a larkin' wi' clats o' dirt, a drowin' o'm to one or t'other's heads. You do know how girt Lucas do like a bit o' fun, an' I too, wi' all my heart. While we was to play, for playing we was, I seed ever so far away, somethin' a-bobbin' up an' down like in the water, and seem'd to come towards us, by jerks like—I could see it for a little bit, then I looked again and could'n see nothin' at all—"Hulloa! Lucas," says I, "blowed if I don't think there's

some men a-swimmin' out there." "Poh!" says he "thee must abin in to the death of a black cat; thee's see double." "Burn'd if I do," says I, "an' I baint moon-blind nuther; 'tis men, I tell 'ee." "Don'ee believe it," says he, "your eyes be dazed, I should think." "Will'ee bet," says I, "that I be moon-blind," says I, "and that, that there id'n two men," says I, "a-swimmin' right in this here way?" says I. "Drowned if I don't," says he to me, "I lay that 'tid'n." "Now," says I, "wi't lay sixpence that 'tid'n?" "Done," says he, "and to back it, there's the money down," says he. I wad'n no such fool, nor yet mad; I down wi' the money too, bold-like 'pon the ground, four marked white boys,* and the sixpenny pieces into the bargain. Yaas, faith! so bold as if I'd a swallered a glass o' grog, for I be a fore-headed fellow, I be, an' I do go on like mad sometimes. But I know'd what I was about all the same; no such fool, not I! Howsomdever, we'd only

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* "Quatre pièces tapées": that is, four *sous* or four *douzains* (pieces of twelve *deniers*) marked or struck with a fleur-de-lis in countermark. This countermark was placed on the *douzains* by royal authority, in order to raise the value to fifteen *deniers* instead of twelve. The people did not like these pieces, and in derision named them "pièces tapées." These "pièces tapées" are not often met with; however, there is one in the cabinet of Charles IX. It is a *douzain* with a fleur-de-lis in countermark.

On this expression "tapée," in the sense of "marked," or, better still, "countermarked," consult Abot de Baringhen, 'Traité des Monnaies,' etc.

At the word *sol*, vol. ii. p. 397, speaking of the *douzain* increased from three *deniers*, he says: "It was called a *sou marqué*, and by the people a *sou tapé*."

See also on the *Douzain*, vol. i. p. 174, *sub voce* "Douzain."

In the Dictionary of Littré, *sub voce* "Pièce," p. 1008, col. 3, may be read: "'Pièce tapée' was the term used originally for every piece 'marked.'" This is not exactly correct; he ought to have said "*countermarked*."

As to the "five *sols en doubles*," that is equivalent to saying double *deniers*, *deniers* for the value five *sols*.

The *sol* was equal to twelve *deniers*: six *double deniers* made a *sol*, and thirty equalled five *sols*.

The people for brevity simply spoke of *des doubles* (omitting the word *deniers*). It is thus that one should understand, if I am not mistaken, the passage in our great comic poet.

(Note kindly communicated to Translator by M. Chabouillet, of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.)

just aplanked down the money when we seed the two men quite clear like, and they was a-signin' to we for to come and fetch 'em, so up I snatches the money. "Come on, Lucas," says I, "you see they be signin' to us; let's look sharp," says I, "and go and help 'em." "Not I," says he, "they made me lose." Well then, to last, an' to make my story short, I badgered'n so that in we jumped into a boat, and then we pulled fore and back steady like, so that we could haul 'em right out o' the water, an' then we took 'em into our house afore the fire, an' then they stripped off everything for to dry theirsels, an' then in come two more of the same lot, what had a made a shift to save theirsels, an' then Mathurine her come in; and then one o'm—he looked sweet upon her. So there! Charlotte, that's ezakly how it all falled out.

CHAR. Didn'ee tell me, Pierrot, one of 'em is ever so much better-lookin' than t'other?

PIER. Aye, sure! that's the maister. I reckon as how he's some girt, fine gen'lman, for he've agot gold upon his clothes from head to foot, and his very sarvants be gen'l-folks; but howsomever, fine gen'lman or no, sure's a gun he would abin drownded if I had'n abin there.

CHAR. Only but to think!

PIER. Oh aye! sure enough! if it hadn't abin for us, he'd a had his belly full.

CHAR. Is he in thy house, astripped now, Pierrot?

PIER. No, no, they put on his things right afore us. My eyes! I never seed one o' that sort dress afore; what a sight o' fal-lals an' tinkerments they officer-like folks do put on. I should be lost in 'em—I should, sure; and I was a'most afrightened for to see it. Hang me! Charlotte, if they ha'nt got hair that don't stick to their heads; and they put it on the last thing, just as if 'twas a great flax cap. They've got shirts with sleeves so wide, that you and me, pinned together, could get into 'em; 'stead o' breeches, they do wear a apron so big as herefrom to next Easter. 'Stead of a waistcoat, they've got short stays like, that don't reach down to their pins; and 'stead of a collar, a girt neck-ankercher all netted like, wi' four big tassels of linen stuff hanging down below the middle. They've got little frills, too, round their wristès, and girt belts of

gold lace round their legs; and beyond all this, such a sight o' ribbins—such a sight o' ribbins that 'tis a regular shame. Even their very shoes—there id'n a bit of 'em from one side to t'other that id'n stuffed out with 'em, and they be made in such a fashion that I should break my neck in 'em.

CHAR. My goodness! Pierrot, I must go and have a look at some o' that.

PIER. Oh! look here, Charlotte, a bit first. I've agot somethin' else to tell 'ee—I have, sure.

CHAR. Very well, speak up, what is it?

PIER. You know, Charlotte, I want, as they do say, to open my heart to 'ee now. I do love 'ee, you know that well enough, and we be going to marry one or t'other—but, an' that's the truth, I baint no ways satisfied wi' you.

CHAR. How's that, what's the matter then?

PIER. To speak out then, you do vex me terrible.

CHAR. But how's that, then?

PIER. I'll be blowed if you do love me one bit.

CHAR. Oh dear! is that all?

PIER. Aye sure, that's all, and enough too.

CHAR. 'Pon my word, Pierrot, you be always a telling the same story.

PIER. I do tell the same story always, 'cause there's always the same story for to tell; and if there wad'n always the same story for to be told, I would'n always be a-tellin' of the same story.

CHAR. But what is it that I must do? What is it you want?

PIER. Well, sure enough, then! I want for 'ee to love me.

CHAR. Don't I love 'ee, then?

PIER. No, you don't, not a bit, though I do all that ever I can for to make 'ee to; I do buy for 'ee, I don't mean no offence mind, new ribbins of every pack-fellow that do pass by. I be fit to break my neck in searching for colley's nestès for 'ee; I do make the fiddlers play 'pon your birthday for 'ee, and after all 'tis just the same's if I beat my head agin the wall. Look here now, 'tid'n no ways right nor yet honest not for to love they that loves you.

CHAR. But, goodness me! I love you, though.

PIER. Oh yaas, an' a purty way o' lovin' 'tis, too.

CHAR. Well, then, whatever d'ee want for me to do?

PIER. I do want for 'ee to do just the same's what other folks do do, when they do love as they ought to.

CHAR. Don't I love 'ee, then, the way that I ought to?

PIER. No, you don't. When love's there, 'tis to be seed, and shows in thousands o' purty little ways to they that's aloved with all your heart. Look to the girt, fat Thomasse, how soft her is about young Rabin; her's always after'n, an' her never lets'n have no paice. Her's always aplayin' some game or another upon un, or nudgin' un when he's a-passin' by; an' t'other day, when he was asot upon a stool, her pulled'n right away from under'n, and made un tumble all along 'pon the ground. Aye! aye! that's how 'tis wi' folks that be in love; but you, you never don't drow a word to me, you do keep yoursel' always jis' the same's a log o' timber, an' I mid pass twenty times beside of 'ee, an' you would'n budge one bit for to give me a little touch, or for to speak a word. I tell 'ee 'tidn' right, there now! once for all; you be too cold for anybody.

CHAR. What is it you want me to do? 'Tis only the way o' me, and I can't fresh make myself.

PIER. Don't tell me about your way. When anybody do love anybody, they always drow out some little signs o't.

CHAR. Well, then, I love you so much as ever I can, there! an' if you baint satisfied, you be quite welcome to go with somebody else.

PIER. Ah! there now, I've agot the sack, have I! Blowed if you cared a bit for me, if you'd ever asaid that there to me.

CHAR. Why ever then do 'ee come an' worrit me out o' my life?

PIER. Now, what have I adone to you amiss? I only ax o' 'ee for a little bit o' love.

CHAR. Well, let me alone then, and not bother me so. P'raps 'twill come all of a hop without thinkin' nothin' at all about it.

PIER. Shake hands 'pon it then, Charlotte.

CHAR. (*giving her hand*). Very well, there 'tis.

PIER. Say, then, that you'll try to love me a little bit more.

CHAR. I'll do all I can towards it; but it must come of its own accord. Pierrot, is that this here gen'lman?

PIER. Aye, that's the man.

CHAR. Well done now! is'n he fine then? what a pity 'twould a bin if he'd abin adrownded.

PIER. I shall be back directly; I must go and have a little drop to set me up a bit after such hard work.

SCENE II.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, CHARLOTTE.

JU. Well, Sganarelle, we have failed; and this unforeseen squall has upset both our bark and our projects; but, to tell you the truth, the peasant girl whom I have just left will make up for this mischance: I have found in her charms which blot out all the vexation the bad success of our adventure has caused me. I must not suffer this heart to escape me, and I have already prepared the way, so that I shall not have long to wait.

SGAN. I must say that you astonish me, sir. Hardly have we escaped death than you try to call down the vengeance of Heaven upon our heads by your usual mad deeds and love affairs, instead of rendering thanks for the mercy it has vouchsafed to us . . . . (*seeing* DON JUAN *looks at him threateningly*). Peace, foolish man that you are, you don't know what you are talking of, and your master knows very well what he is doing. Come . . . .

JU. (*perceiving* CHARLOTTE). Ah! ah! where does this other country wench come from, Sganarelle? Did you ever see anything prettier? and do you not think this one worth the other?

SGAN. Certainly. (*aside*) A new freak.

JU. (*to* CHARLOTTE). How is it, fair one, that I have the sweet pleasure of meeting you? What! do you mean to say that in this rural spot, among these trees and rocks, there are beautiful maidens like you to be found?

CHAR. As you see, master.

JU. Do you belong to this village?

CHAR. Yes, sir.

JU. And do you live here?

CHAR. Yes, sir.

JU. What is your name?

CHAR. Charlotte, and your servant, sir.

JU. Ah! how beautiful she is, and what piercing eyes she has!

CHAR. Oh, master! you make me quite ashamed.

JU. Ah! do not be ashamed to hear what is true about yourself. What do you think, Sganarelle? Did you ever see anything more lovely? Turn this way a little, please. Ah! what a pretty shape! Hold up your head a little, I beg of you. Ah! what a darling face! Open your eyes wide. Ah! how beautiful they are! Show me your teeth also, pray. Ah! how enticing, and how provoking those lips! I am perfectly delighted, I never saw so charming a woman.

CHAR. You be pleased to say so, sir, and I don't know if you are only making fun of me.

JU. Making fun of you? Heaven forbid! I love you too much for that; I speak to you from the bottom of my heart.

CHAR. I am very much obliged to you, sir, if it is so.

JU. Not at all; you have no cause to be obliged to me for what I say, and it is entirely to your beauty that you owe it.

CHAR. All that is said too fine for me. I am not clever enough to answer you, sir.

JU. Sganarelle, look at her hands.

CHAR. Fie, sir, they are as black as I don't know what.

JU. Ah! what are you saying, they are the fairest in the world; allow me to kiss them, I pray.

CHAR. Sir, you do me too much honour; and if I had known it, I would a took care to a washed them with bran.

JU. Pray, tell me, beautiful Charlotte, you are not married, are you?

CHAR. No; but I soon shall be though to our Pierrot, son of our neighbour Simonette, sir.

JU. What! A person like you, to be the wife of a country ploughman! No, no, it is a profanation of so much loveliness; and you were not born to live in a village. You certainly deserve a better fate, and Heaven

knows it, and has sent me here on purpose to prevent this match, and to do justice to your charms: for, in fact, beautiful Charlotte, I love you with all my heart; and it depends entirely on you, for me to take you away from this wretched place, and to put you in the position you deserve to occupy. This love has come very suddenly, but, Charlotte, it is all owing to your great beauty, and I love you as much in a quarter of an hour, as I should love another in six months.

CHAR. Sure, sir, I don't know how to behave myself when you talk so. What you say pleases me, and I should like beyond everything in the world to believe you; but they always tell anybody that they must'n hearken to fine gentlemen,—that you are all deceivers, and don't care so long as you can take in poor girls.

JU. I am not one of those people, Charlotte.

SGAN. (*aside*). No; not he!

CHAR. You see, sir, it is no fun to see oneself imposed upon; I am only a poor country girl, but all the same, I care for honour above everything, and I had rather die than see myself ashamed.

JU. What! I should be so wicked as to impose upon a person like you? I should be base enough to dishonour you? No, no! I have too tender a conscience for that. I love you, Charlotte, in good earnest, honourably; and to show you that I speak the truth, know that all I wish is to marry you. Can you ask for a better proof? I am quite ready for that, as soon as you please, and I take this man here for a witness of what I say.

SGAN. No, no! never fear, he'll marry you as much as you please.

JU. Ah! Charlotte, I see that you do not know me yet. You do me wrong to judge of me by others; and if there are rogues in this world, people who only think of deceiving girls, you must except me from the number, and not doubt of the sincerity of my love. And, besides, your beauty ought to reassure you. When a woman is as handsome as you are, she should have no such fears. You are not, I assure you, one of those that a man would deceive, and I protest I would stab myself to the heart a thousand times if I had the least thought of betraying you.

CHAR. Oh, my! I don't know whether you speak the truth or not; but you act so that anybody a'most believes you.

JU. You do me justice, certainly, by believing me; and I repeat again the promise I have just made you. Will you not consent to be my wife?

CHAR. Oh, yes! that is, providing my aunt is willing.

JU. Shake hands, then, Charlotte, since you on your part have no objection.

CHAR. But at least don't go and deceive me, sir, I pray you! 'Twould be a sin indeed; for you see how I trust you.

JU. How! do you still doubt my sincerity? Do you wish me to make the most awful oaths. May Heaven . . .

CHAR. Oh, no! do not swear. I believe you.

JU. Give me a little kiss, then, as a pledge of your promise.

CHAR. Nay, sir! wait till we are married, then I will kiss you as much as you please.

JU. Well, beautiful Charlotte, I will do as you like; only give me your hand, and suffer me, by a thousand kisses, to express on it the rapture I experience.

SCENE III.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, PIERROT, CHARLOTTE.

PIER. (*pushing away* DON JUAN, *who is kissing* CHARLOTTE'S *hand*). Sober, sir; keep off, plaise; you be gettin' a bit too warm, you mid git the heartburn.

JU. (*pushing back* PIERROT *very hard*). What is it brings this lout here?

PIER. (*placing himself between* DON JUAN *and* CHARLOTTE). I tell 'ee to keep yourself off, an' that you baint a-goin' for to be a-kissin' o' my young woman!

JU. (*pushing away* PIERROT *again*). Ah! what a row!

PIER. Hang me! but 'twon't do for to shove people about like that.

CHAR. (*taking* PIERROT *by the arm*). Let him alone, Pierrot.

PIER. What! let 'n alone! I won't then, not I.

JU. Ah!

PIER. Oh, ah! 'cause you be a fine gen'lman, you can

come and kiss our sweethearts afore our face? Get along and kiss your own.

JU. Eh!

PIER. Eh! (DON JUAN *gives him a box on the ear.*) Now, then! don't hit me. (*another*) Oh, Lor'! (*another*) Oh, Lor'! (*another*) Murder! 'Tis shameful for to beat anybody like that—that id'n the way for to pay anybody for stoppin' o' 'ee from bein' a-drownded.

CHAR. Don't vex yoursel', Pierrot!

PIER. I will vex myself, and you be a nasty hussy, you be, to let 'n come over you.

CHAR. Oh, Pierrot! it is not as you think; that gentleman wants to marry me, and you should not throw yourself into a passion.

PIER. What! the devil! You be a-promised to me.

CHAR. That's no odds, Pierrot; if you love me, did'n you ought to be very glad for me to be a lady?

PIER. No! I tell 'ee no! I'd a purty sight see thee dead, than wi' anybody else.

CHAR. Get out, Pierrot; don't make a fool of yourself. When I'm a lady, I'll put something good in your way, and you shall bring the butter and cheese to our house.

PIER. Be burned if ever I'd car' any—not if you was to pay double for it. That's the way then that you do hearkee to what he do tell up? By George! if I'd a-knowed it aforehand, I'd a-seed where I'd a-pulled 'n out o' the water or no, and I'd a-fetched 'n a crack over the head wi' the oar into the bargain.

JU. (*approaching to strike him*). What is it you say?

PIER. (*sheltering himself behind* CHARLOTTE). I baint afeard o' nobody, drowned if I be.

JU. (*passing to the side where* PIERROT *is*). Only wait a moment.

PIER. (*passing on the other side*). I don't care then, I don't.

JU. (*running after* PIERROT). We'll see that.

PIER. (*running again behind* CHARLOTTE). You're not the first man I've seen.

JU. Ah!

SGAN. Oh, sir! let the poor fellow alone. It's a shame

to beat him. (*to* PIERROT, *placing himself between him and* DON JUAN) Listen, my poor fellow; go away, and don't speak to him.

PIER. (*passing before* SGANARELLE, *and looking fiercely at* DON JUAN) I will speak to him, I will.

JU. (*raising his hand to strike again*). Ah! I'll teach you. (PIERROT *ducks his head and* SGANARELLE *receives the blow.*)

SGAN. Plague take the fool!

JU. (*to* SGANARELLE). You are rewarded for your charity.

PIER. Oh, Lor'! I be goin' to tell her aunt all the whole concarn.

SCENE IV.—DON JUAN, CHARLOTTE, SGANARELLE.

JU. (*to* CHARLOTTE). At last, I am the happiest of men, and I would not give up my happiness for all the world could yield. What pleasure it will be when you are my wife, and that . . . .

SCENE V.—SGANARELLE, DON JUAN, MATHURINE, CHARLOTTE.

SGAN. (*seeing* MATHURINE). Ah! ah!

MATH. (*to* DON JUAN). What are you doing here with Charlotte? Are you making love to her too?

JU. (*aside to* MATHURINE). No, on the contrary, it was she who told me she wished to be my wife, and I was telling her that I was engaged to you.

CHAR. (*to* DON JUAN). Whatever is it that Mathurine can want with you?

JU. (*aside to* CHARLOTTE). She is jealous at seeing me speak to you, and wants me to marry her; but I tell her it is you I want to have.

MATH. What! Charlotte . . . .

JU. (*aside to* MATHURINE). All you could tell her would be useless; she has taken it into her head.

CHAR. How! Mathurine . . . .

JU. (*aside to* CHARLOTTE). You would speak to her in vain; you cannot get this whim out of her head.

MATH. Are you . . . .

JU. (*aside to* MATHURINE). You won't bring her to reason.

CHAR. I should like . . . .

JU. (*aside to* CHARLOTTE). She is like a little devil in her obstinacy.

MATH. Is it really . . . .

JU. (*aside to* MATHURINE). Say nothing to her, she is crazy.

CHAR. I think . . . .

JU. (*aside to* CHARLOTTE). Leave her alone, she is a silly goose.

MATH. No, no; I must speak to her.

CHAR. I must hear her reasons.

MATH. What! . . . .

JU. (*aside to* MATHURINE). I feel sure she will tell you that I have promised to marry her.

CHAR. I . . . .

JU. (*aside to* CHARLOTTE). What'll you bet that she says I have promised to take her for my wife?

MATH. I say, Charlotte, it isn't honest to meddle with other people's bargains.

CHAR. It is not honest, Mathurine, to be jealous because the gentleman speaks to me.

MATH. The gentleman saw me first.

CHAR. If he saw you first, he saw me second, and has promised to marry me.

JU. (*aside to* MATHURINE). Well! what did I tell you?

MATH. (*to* CHARLOTTE). I ask your pardon. It is I, and not you, whom he has promised to marry.

JU. (*aside to* CHARLOTTE). Did I not guess right?

CHAR. I ask yours; 'tis t'other way: he promised to marry me.

MATH. You are laughing. It was me.

CHAR. There he is; he can tell whether I speak the truth.

MATH. There he is, to say if I am wrong, and if I do not say what is true.

CHAR. Have you, now, promised to marry her, sir?

JU. (*aside to* CHARLOTTE). You are jesting with me.

MATH. Is it true, sir, that you have passed her your word to be her husband?

JU. (*aside to* MATHURINE). How can you have such a thought?

CHAR. You see that she maintains it.

JU. (*aside to* CHARLOTTE). Don't take any notice.

MATH. You are witness how she will have it.

JU. (*aside to* MATHURINE). Let her say what she likes.

CHAR. No, no; we must know what's the truth.

MATH. We must have the matter settled.

CHAR. Yes, Mathurine, I want the gentleman to show you how uncommon green you are.

MATH. Yes, Charlotte, I want the gentleman to give you a putting down.

CHAR. (*to* DON JUAN). Say which is right, if you please, sir.

MATH. (*to* DON JUAN). Let's know how 'tis, sir.

CHAR. You will see, directly.

MATH. You will see, too, you will.

CHAR. (*to* DON JUAN). Say it out.

MATH. (*to* DON JUAN). Speak up.

JU. What would you have me say? You both maintain that I have promised to marry you. Do you not, each of you, in private know where the truth lies, without any more explanation? Why will you force me to say it all over again? The one to whom I made a sincere promise, can she not laugh at what the other says, and need she trouble herself, provided I make good my promise to her? All the talk we can have does not forward matters. We must act and not talk; deeds are better than words. Therefore, it is by deeds only that I intend to make you agree; and when I marry, it will be easy to see which of the two has won my heart. (*aside to* MATHURINE) Leave her to believe what she likes. (*aside to* CHARLOTTE) Leave her to flatter herself in her own ideas. (*aside to* MATHURINE) I adore you. (*aside to* CHARLOTTE) I am entirely yours. (*aside to* MATHURINE) All other faces are ugly compared with yours. (*aside to* CHARLOTTE) It is impossible to love anybody else after having seen you. (*aloud*) I have a trifling order to give, I must go; I will be back in a quarter of an hour.

SCENE VI.—CHARLOTTE, MATHURINE, SGANARELLE.

CHAR. (*to* MATHURINE). Anyhow, I am the one he loves.

MATH. (*to* CHARLOTTE). I am the one he will marry.

SGAN. (*stopping* CHARLOTTE *and* MATHURINE). Ah! poor girls that you are; I pity your innocence, and I can't bear to see you rush to your ruin. Believe me both; don't be imposed upon by all that he tells you, and stop in your village.

SCENE VII.—DON JUAN (*in the background*), CHARLOTTE, MATHURINE, SGANARELLE.

JU. (*aside*). I should like to know why Sganarelle does not follow me.

SGAN. (*not seeing* DON JUAN). My master is an impostor; his only intention is to deceive you both; he has deceived many besides you; he marries everybody, and . . . . (*seeing* DON JUAN) It is false, and whoever tells you such a thing, you can say to him that he tells a lie. My master does not marry everybody; he is no impostor; he does not intend to deceive you, and he has never ruined anyone. Ah! here he is; ask him yourselves if you like.

JU. (*looking at* SGANARELLE, *and suspecting him of having said something*). Yes!

SGAN. Sir, as the world is full of slanderers, I anticipate matters, and I tell them, that if anyone said anything against you, they were to be very careful not to believe it, and to say that it was a lie.

JU. Sganarelle!

SGAN. (*to* CHARLOTTE *and* MATHURINE). Yes, my master is a man of honour; I warrant him such.

JU. Hem!

SGAN. They are impertinent rascals.

SCENE VIII.—DON JUAN, LA RAMÉE, CHARLOTTE, MATHURINE, SGANARELLE.

LA RAM. (*aside to* DON JUAN). Sir, I have come to tell you that it is not safe for you here.

JU. Why not?

LA RAM. Twelve men on horseback are looking for

you, and will be here in a moment. I don't know how they can have followed you; but I have the news from a labourer of whom they asked your whereabouts, and to whom they described you. The affair is urgent, and the sooner you can get away the better.

SCENE IX.—DON JUAN, CHARLOTTE, MATHURINE, SGANARELLE.

JU. (*to* CHARLOTTE *and* MATHURINE). A pressing business obliges me to go away; but I hope you will remember the promise I made you, and that before to-morrow evening you shall certainly have news from me.

SCENE X.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

JU. As the sides are not equal, we must resort to stratagem, and cleverly avoid the misfortune which is threatening me. I wish you, Sganarelle, to put on my clothes, and I . . . .

SGAN. You are joking, sir, to expose me to be killed in your clothes, and . . . .

JU. Come, quick, I do you too much honour. Happy the servant who has the glory of dying for his master.

SGAN. I thank you for such an honour. (*alone*) O heaven! Since this is a case of death, grant that I may not be taken for another.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Forest.* DON JUAN (*dressed as a country gentleman*), SGANARELLE (*dressed as a doctor*).

SGAN. Now, sir, acknowledge that I was right, and that we are both wonderfully well disguised. Your first idea was not at all a good one; and in this way we are much better off than we should have been.

JU. It is true that you look very well. Where in the world have you unearthed this absurd get-up?

SGAN. It is the dress of an old doctor which was left in pawn where I found it, and I had to pay something hand-

some to get it. But do you know, sir, that this dress has already brought me into some consideration, and that the people I meet salute me, and come to consult me as a skilful man.

Ju. Ah! what?

Sgan. Five or six peasants, both men and women, on seeing me pass, came to seek my advice about divers diseases.

Ju. You answered that you knew nothing about it?

Sgan. No; not I! I wished to uphold the honour of the cloth. I reasoned on their sickness and gave prescriptions to each.

Ju. What remedies did you prescribe?

Sgan. To tell the truth, I gave anything that came into my head, and prescribed at random. It would be an amusing thing if some of my patients recovered and came and thanked me, after all.

Ju. And why not? Why should you not have the same privileges as all other doctors? They have no more to do with a cure than you have, and all their science is pure grimace. If, by good fortune, things go well, they receive the honour; and you, like them, can profit by the good luck of the patient, and have attributed to your remedies all that proceeds from a lucky chance or from the resources of nature!

Sgan. What, sir, you are also a disbeliever in medicine?

Ju. It is one of the greatest errors which exist among men.

Sgan. What! Have you no belief either in senna, cassia, nor antimonial wine?

Ju. And why would you have me believe in these things?

Sgan. Well, you must be of a very unbelieving disposition! Yet you see how for some time back antimonial wine has occupied the public mind. The miracles it has operated have convinced the most incredulous, and it is but three weeks ago, that I, who am now speaking to you, saw its wonderful power.

Ju. How was that?

Sgan. There was a man who had been six days at death's door; no one knew what to do for him; every remedy

had failed. At last the doctors thought of giving him the antimonial wine.

JU. And he was saved, no doubt?

SGAN. No; he died.

JU. Wonderful result!

SGAN. Why, yes! For six whole days he could not die, and it killed him at once. Do you wish for anything more efficacious?

JU. No, you are right.

SGAN. But let us leave aside physic, in which you do not believe, and speak of something else; for this dress makes me feel quite clever, and I want to argue with you. You know that you allow me to argue, and that it is only remonstrances you forbid.

JU. Well?

SGAN. I wish I could really know what your thoughts are. Is it possible that you do not at all believe in Heaven?

JU. Leave that alone.

SGAN. Which means "No." And in hell

JU. Eh?

SGAN. Nor in that either. And in the devil, if you please?

JU. Yes, yes.

SGAN. No more than in the rest. Do you believe in another life?

JU. Ah! ah!

SGAN. This is a man I shall find difficult to convert. Tell me, now, what do you think of the *moine bourru?**

JU. Plague take the ass!

SGAN. Well, I can't put up with that, don't you see, for there is nothing more true than the *moine bourru*. I would consent to be hanged for him. One must believe in something here below. What do you believe in?

JU. What do I believe in?

SGAN. Yes.

JU. Well, I believe that two and two make four, Sganarelle, and that four and four make eight.

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* A ghost which ran about the streets during the night, and attacked those who returned late to their homes.

SGAN. A noble belief and grand articles of faith! Your religion is arithmetic, I see. One must acknowledge that men take strange fancies into their heads, and that we are not always the wisest for having studied much. For my own part, sir, I have not studied like you, thank Heaven, and nobody can boast of having taught me anything; but with my little grain of common sense, and my little grain of judgment, I see things better than books, and I understand perfectly well that this world which we see has not shot up alone in a night, like a mushroom. I should like to ask you who made these trees, these rocks, this earth, and this sky we see so high above our heads, and whether all this has sprung up of itself? Here, for instance, are you: did you make yourself alone? Must not your father have known your mother for you to come into the world? Can you see all the combinations with which the machine of man is composed, without admiring how one part hangs upon another? These nerves, these bones, these veins, these arteries, this . . . . these lungs, this heart, this liver, and all the other ingredients which are to be found there, and which . . . . Oh! I say, do stop me, do interrupt me; I can't argue unless I am interrupted. You are silent on purpose, and leave me to speak out of mischief.

JU. I am waiting for your reasoning to be over.

SGAN. My reasoning, whatever you may say, is that there is something wonderful in man which all your learned people cannot explain. Is it not marvellous that I am here, and that I have in my head something which thinks ever so many different things in one moment, and does all it likes with my body? I want to strike my hands, to lift up my arm, to raise my eyes towards heaven, to bend down my head, to move my feet, to go to the right, to the left, forwards, backwards, to turn . . . .

(*Falls down while turning round.*)

JU. Ah, good! There is your argument on the ground, with a broken nose.

SGAN. Upon my word, I am very foolish to think of reasoning with you. Believe what you like; what do I care whether you are damned or not!

JU. But while you are reasoning, I think we must have lost our way. Call that man yonder, and ask him the road.

* SCENE II.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, A POOR MAN.

SGAN. Hallo! ho! you fellow! Ho! I say! Ho! friend! a word, please. Tell us the way to the town.

POOR. You have but to follow this path, gentlemen, and to turn to the right hand when you have crossed the forest; only, I warn you to be on your guard: for some time now we have had robbers about here.

JU. I thank you, friend, and am heartily obliged to you.

POOR. If you would help me a little, sir . . . .

JU. Ah! ah! your advice was not disinterested, I see.

POOR. I am a poor man, sir, and have been living all alone in this forest for the last ten years. I will not fail to pray Heaven for you that it may shower its favours upon you.

JU. Pray to it for a coat, and don't trouble yourself about the wants of others.

SGAN. My good fellow, you do not know this gentleman; he only believes that two and two make four, and that four and four make eight.

JU. What is your occupation among these trees?

POOR. I pray to Heaven for the prosperity of the good people who give me something.

JU. Then, of course, you never want for anything?

POOR. Alas! sir, I am in the greatest distress imaginable.

JU. You are laughing. A man who prays to Heaven all day cannot fail to be well off.

POOR. I assure you, sir, that generally I have not even a morsel of bread to eat.

JU. That's odd, and you are badly rewarded for your trouble. I'll give you a gold piece at once if you will only swear.

POOR. Oh! sir, would you have me commit such a sin?

JU. You must just make up your mind, whether you want to earn a gold piece or not. Here is one, you see; I'll give it you, if you swear; here, out with the oath.

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* This scene, and part of the preceding one, were thought too irreligious, and were suppressed at the second representation.

POOR. Sir . . . .

JU. You won't have it if you don't.

SGAN. Come, come, swear a little; there is no harm in it.

JU. Here, take it, I tell you; but swear.

POOR. No, sir; I had rather starve.

JU. There, there, I give it you for the sake of humanity.* (*looking into the forest*) But what do I see, one man attacked by three! The struggle is not equal, and I cannot bear with such a dastardly business.

(*Draws his sword and runs forward.*)

SCENE III.—SGANARELLE (*alone*).

My master is mad to go and rush into a danger which he can avoid. But I declare his help has turned the scales, and the two have put the three to flight.

SCENE IV.—DON JUAN, DON CARLOS, SGANARELLE (*at the end of the stage*).

CAR. (*putting up his sword*). The flight of these robbers shows me the help your arm has rendered me. Suffer me, sir, to thank you for such a generous action, and . . . .

JU. I have done nothing, sir, that you would not have done in my place. Our conduct in such perils touches our honour; and the action of these wretches was so cowardly, that it would have been sharing it not to have opposed them. But how is it you fell into their hands?

CAR. I had, by chance, lost sight of my brother and the rest of our party; and as I was looking for them I met with those scoundrels, who first killed my horse, and who, without your help, would have done as much for me.

JU. Is it your intention to go towards the town?

CAR. Yes, but not to enter it. My brother and I are obliged to keep in the country, on account of one of those troublesome affairs which compel gentlemen to sacrifice themselves and their families to the tyranny of their

* "In this sentence 'humanity'='mankind,' a comparatively new meaning, unknown in Latin."—LITTRÉ. The addition of "helpless" would render more clear what Don Juan no doubt really meant.

honour; since, in fact, success in its most favourable form is still grievous, for if we do not lose our life, we must leave our country. I think that in this a gentleman is truly to be pitied, for however prudent and virtuous he may be, he cannot answer for it that he will not be called to account by the laws of honour for the conduct of another; that he will not see his life, his peace, and fortune at the mercy of the first miscreant who takes it into his head to do him that kind of injury for which an honest man must risk his life.

Ju. We have, however, this advantage, that we make those who wantonly offend us, run the same risk and experience the same discomfort as ourselves. But would it be indiscreet to ask you what this affair of honour may be?

Car. The thing has come to such a point that there is no possibility of making a secret of it. When the insult is once made public, honour no longer requires that we should conceal our shame, but that we should show our desire for revenge, and loudly proclaim our readiness to carry it out. I feel, therefore, no hesitation in telling you, sir, that we are bent on avenging a sister who was carried off from her convent and ruined; and that the author of this offence is a certain Don Juan Tenorio, son of Don Louis Tenorio. We have been looking for him these last few days; and a servant having told us that he had gone out on horseback, accompanied by five or six men, and that he had come along this hill-side, we followed him here; but all our researches have been in vain, and we have not been able, as yet, to discover his whereabouts.

Ju. Do you know, sir, this Don Juan of whom you speak?

Car. No, I do not. I have never seen him, and have only heard my brother describe him; however, report does not say much good of him, and he is a man whose life . . . .

Ju. Stop, sir, if you please; he is somewhat a friend of mine, and it would be rather cowardly in me to hear him ill-spoken of.

Car. For your sake, sir, I will say no more about him. The least thing I can do for you, after you have saved my life, is to be silent before you concerning a person you

know, when I can say no good of him. But, however friendly you may be with him, I hope you do not approve of this action, and do not think it wrong in us to endeavour to avenge it?

JU. On the contrary, I will serve you in this, and spare you a useless trouble. It is true that I am a friend of Don Juan's—I can hardly be otherwise; but it is not right that he should offend gentlemen with impunity, and I will see that he gives you satisfaction.

CAR. And what satisfaction can one give for such an offence?

JU. All that your honour may require; and without giving yourself the trouble of trying any longer to discover where he is, I promise you that you will find him in any place you may appoint, and at the time you name.

CAR. This is welcome news, sir, to an offended heart; but, after what I owe you, it would be real grief to me to see you mixed up in the quarrel.

JU. In short, I am so truly attached to Don Juan that he would not fight without my fighting also; I answer for him as if for myself, and you have only to say when you wish him to appear to give you satisfaction.

CAR. How cruel destiny is to me! Why must I owe you my life when Don Juan is one of your friends?

SCENE V.—DON ALONZO, DON CARLOS, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

ALON. (*speaking to his attendants without seeing either* DON CARLOS *or* DON JUAN). Give my horses drink, and bring them after us; I will go on foot a little. (*perceiving them both*) O heavens! what do I see? Brother, you are here talking to our mortal enemy!

CAR. Our mortal enemy!

JU. (*placing his hand on his sword*). Yes, I am Don Juan, and although you are many against me, I have no intention of disowning my name.

ALON. (*drawing his sword*). Ah! traitor, you shall die; and . . . . (SGANARELLE *runs away to hide himself.*)

CAR. Stop, brother! I owe him my life, and without his help I should have been murdered by robbers.

ALON. And can such a consideration stop your vengeance? All the services rendered to us by the hand of an enemy can have no power to stay our revenge. If we are to measure the obligation by the injury, your gratitude, brother, is ridiculous; for as honour is infinitely more precious than life, we can owe nothing to a man who has saved our life after having robbed us of our honour.

CAR. I know, brother, the difference a gentleman must make between the two, and gratitude for the service rendered does not blot out in me the resentment for the injury. Still allow me here to restore to him what I have received from him, and to acquit myself of the life I owe him by putting off the day of vengeance and by leaving him at liberty to enjoy for a few days the fruit of his good deed.

ALON. No, no, it is hazarding our revenge too much to put it off, and we may perhaps lose thus an opportunity which will never return. Heaven now offers it to us; it is for us to improve it. When honour is mortally wounded one cannot stop at half-measures, and if you do not care to lend your aid for this action you have only to withdraw and leave to my arm the glory of such a revenge.

CAR. I beg of you, brother . . . .

ALON. Nothing that you say can stop me; he must die.

CAR. Hold, brother, I command you; I will not suffer any attempt upon his life; and I take Heaven to witness that I will defend him against anyone, and that this same life which he saved shall be a buckler to him. Before your blows reach him you will have to pierce my heart.

ALON. What! do you side with our enemy against me? and, far from being seized at his aspect with the horror which I experience, have you for him feelings of tenderness?

CAR. Brother, let us show our moderation in a just cause; and not avenge our honour with such fury. Let us be masters of our own courage. Let our valour be free from brutality. Let us act with the full command of our reason, and not allow ourselves to be urged on by blind wrath. I have no intention of remaining a debtor to our enemy. I have towards him an obligation which before all things I must pay back. Our revenge will lose nothing by being put off; on the contrary, the delay will enhance

its greatness; and to have had an opportunity which we did not seize, will only make our revenge more just in the eyes of the world.

ALON. What extraordinary weakness and what dreadful blindness to hazard our honour for the absurd scruples of an imaginary obligation!

CAR. No, brother, do not be anxious; if I am wrong, I shall know how to make amends for it. I take upon myself the care of our honour; I know what it requires of us, and this delay of a day which my gratitude asks, will only increase the wish I have to satisfy it. Don Juan, you see how anxious I am to return you the gift I received from you; you can judge from that of the rest, and can believe that the same warmth which I use to defend you, I will use to revenge myself; and that I shall be as exact in paying you back for the offence, as I am for the service rendered. I have no intention to force you to explain your feelings here, and you can think with leisure on the decision you must come to. You understand fully the greatness of the offence you have done us, and I make you the judge of the reparation it demands. You have in your power gentle means that would satisfy us; there are others violent and bloody! But whatever may be the choice you make, you have given me your word that Don Juan will give me due satisfaction. Think of it, I pray, and remember that away from this place I am a debtor to honour alone.

JU. I have asked nothing of you, and I shall keep the promise I made.

CAR. Come, brother, one moment of moderation now will not make us less severe when the time for action arrives.

SCENE VI.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

JU. I say! Hallo, Sganarelle!

SGAN. (*coming out of his hiding-place*). What is it?

JU. What, you rascal, you run away when I am attacked?

SGAN. Excuse me, sir, I was close by. I believe that these clothes have some medicinal virtue, and that wearing them is as good as . . . .

JU. Out with you, you insolent rascal! At least hide

your cowardice under a more decent veil. Do you know who it is I saved from being murdered?

SGAN. I? no.

JU. A brother of Elvira.

SGAN. A . . . .

JU. He is a gentleman, and has behaved very well. I am sorry to have fallen out with him.

SGAN. It would be easy for you to restore peace.

JU. Yes, but my passion for Elvira is worn out, and the engagement does not agree with my disposition. I like freedom in love, and I could not bring myself to shut up my heart between four walls. I have told you again and again I have a natural propensity to be carried away by whatever attracts me. My heart belongs to the whole of the fair sex, and it is their affair to take it in turns and to keep it as long as they can. But, tell me, what is this fine monument I see between those trees?

SGAN. Don't you know it?

JU. No, I do not.

SGAN. No! why, it is the tomb that the commandant was building when you killed him.

JU. Ah! to be sure. I had no idea it was anywhere about here. Everybody says wonders of that building as well as of the statue of the commandant, and I have a great mind to go and see it.

SGAN. Sir, don't go there.

JU. Why not?

SGAN. It is not polite to go and see a man you have killed.

JU. On the contrary, it is a visit of condolence I want to pay him, and which he must receive kindly if he is a gentleman. Come, let us go in. (*The tomb opens and the statue of the commandant is seen.*)

SGAN. Ah, how beautiful it all is! What fine statues! How beautiful the marble is, and these handsome pillars! What do you think of it, sir?

JU. That the ambition of a dead man can go no farther. What I wonder at is that a man who passed his life in a modest enough dwelling, could have wished for such a magnificent place when it could be of no use to him.

SGAN. This is the statue of the commandant.

JU. How fine he looks in his costume of a Roman emperor!

SGAN. Upon my soul, sir, it's beautifully done. Anyone would say he is alive and was going to speak. He casts upon us looks that would frighten me if I were alone, and I fancy he is not pleased to see us.

JU. He would certainly be wrong, and it would be acknowledging badly the honour I do him. Ask him if he will come and have some supper with me.

SGAN. It is a thing he has little need of, I think.

JU. Ask him, I say.

SGAN. You are jesting, sir. It would be madness to go and speak to a statue.

JU. Do as I tell you.

SGAN. What a whim! My lord .... (*aside*) I can't help laughing at my folly, but it is my master who makes me do it. (*aloud*) My lord, Don Juan, my master, asks you to do him the honour of taking supper with him. (*The statue inclines its head.*) Ah!

JU. What is it? what is the matter with you? speak, will you?

SGAN. (*bending his head like the statue*). The statue ....

JU. Well! the statue; what do you mean, idiot?

SGAN. I say that the statue ....

JU. The statue .... the statue? I'll knock you down if you don't speak.

SGAN. The statue made a sign to me.

JU. Plague take the ass!

SGAN. He made me a sign, I tell you; it's the simple truth. Go and speak to him yourself, and you will see. Perhaps ....

JU. Come, you rascal. I will make you see your cowardice. Will my lord, the commandant, come and have supper with me? (*The statue inclines its head again.*)

SGAN. I would not have had you miss it for ten pistoles.* Well! sir?

JU. Come, let us leave this place.

SGAN. (*aside*). Such are our freethinkers who believe in nothing!

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* *En tenir dix pistoles*, according to Génin: "'Well, sir, is your incredulity convinced? I would not, for ten pistoles, that the statue had not inclined its head.' *En* denotes exchange in this sentence." ('Lexique de Molière,' p. 392.) This seems to be the meaning.

ACT IV.

The Scene: DON JUAN'S *apartment.*

SCENE I.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, RAGOTIN.

JU. However, it may be, leave it alone; it is a mere trifle, and we may have been deceived by a false light, or by some swimming in the head which obscured our sight.

SGAN. Ah! sir, do not try to disbelieve what we both saw with our own eyes. There is nothing more real than that nod; and I have no doubt that Heaven, offended by your conduct, has wrought this miracle to convince you and to reclaim you from . . . .

JU. Now listen, if you tease me any more with your absurd sermons, and say another word on that subject, I will call one of the servants for a leathern strap, have three or four people to hold you, and thrash you soundly. You understand me, do you?

SGAN. Perfectly, sir, perfectly. You explain yourself very clearly. You have that good point about you, that you do not beat about the bush, but say things with wonderful plainness.

JU. Now, my supper, as quickly as possible. A chair, boy!

SCENE II.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, LA VIOLETTE, RAGOTIN.

LA VIO. Sir, here is your tradesman, Mr. Dimanche, who wants to speak to you.

SGAN. Good, now; we only lacked the entertainment of a creditor. What business has he to come and ask us for money? and why did you not tell him that your master was out?

LA VIO. I have been telling him so for the last three-quarters of an hour, but he won't believe me; and he has seated himself inside there, and is waiting.

SGAN. Let him wait as long as he likes.

JU. No, on the contrary, make him come in. It is a very bad plan not to allow our creditors to see us. It is

right we should pay them with something, and I have the secret of sending them away satisfied, without giving them a farthing.

SCENE III.—DON JUAN, MR. DIMANCHE, SGANARELLE, LA VIOLETTE, RAGOTIN.

JU. Ah! Mr. Dimanche, come in, I beg. How delighted I am to see you, and how angry I am with my servants for having kept you waiting! I had given orders that nobody should be let in, but this order had nothing to do with you, and you have a right to find my doors always open.

DIM. Sir, I am much obliged to you.

JU. (*speaking to* LA VIOLETTE *and* RAGOTIN). 'Sdeath, scoundrels! I'll teach you to keep Mr. Dimanche waiting, and show you how to distinguish people.

DIM. It doesn't matter, sir.

JU. (*to* MR. DIMANCHE). What! to tell you that I am not at home! you, Mr. Dimanche, my best friend!

DIM. Sir, I thank you. I came . . . .

JU. Quick! a seat for Mr. Dimanche.

DIM. Sir, I am very well as I am.

JU. Not a bit—not a bit; I will have you take a seat near me.

DIM. It is not necessary.

JU. Take away this stool, and bring an arm-chair.

DIM. Sir, you forget; and . . . .

JU. No, no; I know how much I am indebted to you, and I will have no difference made between us.

DIM. Sir . . . .

JU. Come, sit down.

DIM. It is not necessary, sir, and I have only a word to say. I was . . . .

JU. Sit down here, I say.

DIM. No, sir; I am quite comfortable . . . . I come for . . . .

JU. No, I will not listen if you do not sit down.

DIM. Sir, to please you I will do so. I . . . .

JU. Egad! Mr. Dimanche, how well you look!

DIM. Yes, sir, I am very well; at your service. I came . . . .

JU. You look the picture of health: rosy lips, ruddy complexion, and sparkling eyes.

DIM. I should be glad to . . . .

JU. And how is Mrs. Dimanche, your wife?

DIM. Very well, sir, thank Heaven.

JU. She is a most excellent woman.

DIM. She is your humble servant, sir. I came . . . .

JU. And your little girl Claudine, how is she?

DIM. As well as possible.

JU. What a dear little girl she is! I love her with all my heart.

DIM. You do her too much honour, sir. I wanted you . . . .

JU. And the little Colin, does he still make as much noise with his drum?

DIM. Always the same, sir. I . . . .

JU. And your little dog Brusquet—does he growl as loud as ever? and does he still heartily bite the legs of those who go to your house?

DIM. More than ever, sir; and we hardly know what to do with him.

JU. You must not be surprised if I ask after all your family; I feel the greatest interest in you all.

DIM. We are all greatly obliged to you, sir. I . . . .

JU. (*holding out his hand*). Shake hands, then, Mr. Dimanche. Are you really one of my friends?

DIM. Sir, I am your humble servant.

JU. Egad! I am yours with all my heart.

DIM. You do me too much honour. I . . . .

JU. There is nothing I would not do for you.

DIM. Sir, you really are too kind.

JU. And it is without any interested motives, I assure you.

DIM. I certainly have not deserved such a favour; but, sir . . . .

JU. Now, Mr. Dimanche, without ceremony, have some supper with me.

DIM. No, sir, thank you; I must go back at once. I . . . .

JU. (*rising*). Come, quick! A torch to light Mr. Dimanche, and let four or five of my people take their muskets to escort him.

DIM. (*rising also*). Sir, there is no need; I can very well go alone. But . . . .

(SGANARELLE *quickly takes the seats away.*)

JU. No! I will have somebody go with you. I am too much interested in your person. I am your servant, and, what is more, your debtor.

DIM. Ah! sir . . . .

JU. It is a thing I have no wish to hide, and I tell everybody of it.

DIM. If . . . .

JU. Shall I go with you myself?

DIM. Ah! sir, you are laughing. Sir . . . .

JU. Embrace me, then, pray. I ask you once more to consider me wholly yours, and to remember that there is nothing I would not do for you. (*Exit.*)

SCENE IV.—DIMANCHE, SGANARELLE.

SGAN. We must confess that you have in our master a man who loves you very much.

DIM. Yes, it is true; he is so civil, and pays me so many compliments, that I never dare ask him for any money.

SGAN. I assure you that his whole household would die for you. I wish something would happen to you—that somebody tried to beat you—you would see in what way we . . . .

DIM. I believe it; but, Sganarelle, speak to him, I beg of you, a word or two about my money.

SGAN. Oh! never fear; he will pay you all right.

DIM. But you, Sganarelle, you also owe me something on your own account.

SGAN. Fie! don't speak of that.

DIM. How? I . . . .

SGAN. Don't I know what I owe you?

DIM. Yes; but . . . .

SGAN. Now, come, Mr. Dimanche, let me show you the way.

DIM. But my money?

SGAN. (*taking him by the arm*). You are laughing?

DIM. I wish . . . .

SGAN. (*pushing him*). Now, now.

DIM. I must . . . .
SGAN. (*pushing him towards the door*). Rubbish!
DIM. But . . . .
SGAN. (*pushing him again*). Fie!
DIM. I . . . .
SGAN. (*pushing him right out*). Fie! I say; fie!

SCENE V.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, LA VIOLETTE.

LA VIO. (*to* DON JUAN). Sir, your father is here.
JU. Ah! well. That was the only thing wanted to put me out of all patience.

SCENE VI.—DON LOUIS, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

LOU. I see plainly that my coming disturbs you, and that you would do very well without it. To say the truth, we are strangely in each other's way; and, if you are tired of seeing me, I am no less tired of your behaviour. Alas! how little we know what we do when we do not leave to Heaven the care of deciding what is best for us; when we want to be wiser than it is, and importune it with our blind wishes or our inconsiderate requests! I longed for a son, with intense longing; I prayed incessantly with the utmost ardour and earnestness; and the son whom Heaven, wearied by my prayers, granted me at last, is the one terrible trial of my life, the destroyer of that peace and joy which I thought he would bring to me. With what eyes do you think I can look on those many, many unworthy actions, the baseness of which I can hardly disguise to the world; that long series of quarrels which forces me hourly to weary the indulgence of our sovereign, and which have proved stronger even than the merit of my services and the credit of my friends? Ah! what baseness is yours! Do you feel no shame to be so little worthy of your birth? Have you, tell me, any right to boast of it? and what have you done in the world to make yourself worthy of being called a gentleman? Do you think it sufficient to bear the name and the arms of one, and that we can pride ourselves upon our being of noble blood when we lead an infamous life? No, no;

birth is nothing where virtue is not. We have no share in the glory of our ancestors unless we strive to be like them. The glory shed by their noble deeds calls us to do them the same honour, to follow in their steps, and not to depart from their virtues, if we wish to be esteemed their true descendants. You in vain trace back your descent: your ancestors disown you, and all the noble actions they have done confer no advantage upon you, but only serve to bring your dishonour into bolder relief; their glory is a torch, by the light of which men can read your shame. Know that a man of noble blood who leads a bad life is a monster in nature, and that virtue is the first title to nobility. I look less to the name that is signed, than to the actions; and I should be more proud of being the son of an honest porter than that of a monarch who lived your life.

JU. Would it not be more comfortable for you to talk if you were seated, sir?

LOU. No, insolent! I will neither sit down nor speak any longer, and I see clearly that all my words make no impression on your heart. But know, unworthy son, that the love of your father is from henceforth lost to you; that I shall know how to put an end to your shameful life sooner than you expect, forestall the wrath of Heaven, and wipe off by your punishment the shame of having given you life.

SCENE VII.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

JU. (*speaking to his father, although he has left*). Eh! die as soon as possible; it is the best thing you can do. Each in his turn. I can't bear to see fathers live as long as their children. (*Sits down in an arm-chair.*)

SGAN. Ah! sir; you are wrong.

JU. (*rising quickly*). I wrong!

SGAN. (*trembling*). Sir . . . .

JU. I wrong!

SGAN. Yes, sir; you are wrong to have listened to all he said to you, and you should have turned him out by the neck and shoulders. Did you ever see anything more impertinent? A father who comes and remonstrates with

his son, tells him to reform his conduct, reminds him of his birth, tells him to lead the life of an honest man, and a thousand other absurdities of the kind. It is not to be borne by such a man as you, who knows what life is! I wonder at your patience, and, had I been in your place, I would have sent him about his business. (*aside*) O cursed weakness, to what dost thou reduce me!

JU. Will you not let me have my supper soon?

SCENE VIII.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, RAGOTIN.

RAGO. Sir, a lady, wearing a thick veil, wishes to speak to you.

JU. Who can it be?

SGAN. We must see.

SCENE IX.—DONNA ELVIRA (*veiled*), DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

ELV. Do not be surprised, Don Juan, to see me at this hour of night, and in such a way. It is a pressing motive which brings me to you, and what I have to say admits of no delay. I do not come here full of that wrath which I showed you this morning; you see a great change in me. It is no longer that Donna Elvira who called the wrath of Heaven upon you, and who thought of nothing but threats and revenge. Heaven has banished from my soul the unworthy passion I had for you; all those tumultuous transports of a criminal attachment; all those shameful ravings of a coarse, terrestrial love. There is nothing left in my heart but a love free from all sensual feeling; a holy tenderness; an affection which craves for nothing, acts no longer for itself, and which cares only for your own interests.

JU. (*aside to* SGANARELLE). You are weeping, I do believe!

SGAN. Excuse me.

ELV. It is this pure and perfect love which brings me here for your good, to tell you of a warning from Heaven, and to recall you from the abyss to which you are running. Yes, Don Juan, I know all the irregularities of your life; and that same Heaven which has touched my heart has

inspired me with the thought of coming to you, to tell you that the measure of your sins is full, that the wrath of Heaven is ready to fall upon you, that a prompt repentance alone can save you, that perhaps you have hardly one day left to save yourself from the greatest of all miseries. I am no longer united to you by earthly ties. I thank Heaven that I have forsworn for ever all my worldly thoughts. A convent will receive me; and I ask only for enough time to expiate the sins I have committed, and earn by an austere penitence, forgiveness for the blindness into which I have been carried through the ardour of a guilty passion. In my retreat it would be an extreme grief to me to think that a person I once cherished with so much tenderness should have become a fearful example of the justice of Heaven; but my joy would be unspeakable if I could prevail upon you to ward off the terrible fate which threatens you. Don Juan, as a last favour, grant me this sweet comfort. Do not refuse me your salvation, which I ask of you with tears; and if your own welfare does not move you, suffer yourself to be convinced by my prayers, and spare me the horror of knowing that you are condemned to eternal torments.

SGAN. (*aside*). Poor lady!

ELV. I once loved you with an extreme tenderness; nothing in the world was dearer to me than you; I forget my duty for your sake; I have done everything for you; and all the reward I ask is that you should amend your life and prevent your eternal ruin. Save yourself, I beseech you, for your sake or for mine. Once more, Don Juan, I ask it of you with tears; and if the tears of a person you have loved are not sufficient, I ask it of you in the name of all that is most dear to you.

SGAN. (*aside, looking at* DON JUAN). He has the heart of a tiger.

ELV. I will leave you now, Don Juan, for this is all I had to say to you.

JU. It is late, madam, stay here. We will give you the best accommodation we can.

ELV. No, Don Juan, do not detain me.

JU. I should be happy to see you stop, I assure you.

ELV. No, it is useless; do not let us waste time in

superfluous words. Let me go away quickly; do not trouble yourself about taking me back, and only think of profiting by my advice.

SCENE X.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

JU. Do you know that I felt somewhat moved towards her; that I found a certain pleasure in the strange novelty of the thing; and that her negligent dress, her languishing look, and her tears have rekindled in me the dying embers of my love.

SGAN. Which means that her words have had no influence over you?

JU. Let me have supper at once.

SGAN. Very well.

SCENE XI.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, LA VIOLETTE, RAGOTIN.

JU. (*seating himself at the table*). Sganarelle, I see that we must think of amending our lives.

SGAN. Ay, we must.

JU. Yes, indeed. Twenty or thirty more years of this kind of life, and then we will think of reforming.

SGAN. Ah!

JU. What do you say?

SGAN. Nothing. Here is the supper. (*He takes a piece from one of the dishes and puts it in his mouth.*)

JU. Your cheek seems swollen. What is the matter? Speak.

SGAN. Nothing.

JU. Let me look a moment. It is a bad swelling you have on your cheek. Quick, a lancet! The poor fellow is suffering terribly, and this abscess might choke him; see how ripe it was! Ah! rascal that you are!

SGAN. Indeed, sir, I only wanted to see if your cook had not put too much pepper or salt.

JU. Very well; sit down here and eat. I want you after supper; you are hungry, I see.

SGAN. (*sitting down at the table*). I should think that I am; I have had nothing since this morning. Just taste

this, it is most delicious. (*to* RAGOTIN, *who, as fast as* SGANARELLE *puts anything on his plate, takes it away when he turns his head*) My plate! my plate! Gently, if you please; by jingo, how skilful you are in giving clean plates! And you, little La Violette, how well you know how to give to drink! (*Whilst* LA VIOLETTE *gives something to drink to* SGANARELLE, RAGOTIN *takes his plate away again.*)

JU. Who can it be knocking in such a way?

SGAN. Who the deuce can come and trouble us at this time of day?

JU. I mean to have my supper quietly; let nobody come in.

SGAN. Leave that to me, I will go and settle that myself.

JU. (*seeing* SGANARELLE *come back quite frightened*). What is it? what is the matter?

SGAN. (*nodding his head like the statue*). The . . . . is there!

JU. I will go and see, and will show you that nothing can frighten me.

SGAN. Ah! poor Sganarelle, where can you hide yourself?

SCENE XII.—DON JUAN, THE STATUE OF THE COMMANDANT, SGANARELLE, LA VIOLETTE, RAGOTIN.

JU. (*to his attendants*). A chair and a plate. Quick. (DON JUAN *and the Statue sit down at the table.*) (*to* SGANARELLE) Come, sit down.

SGAN. Sir, I am no longer hungry.

JU. Sit down, then, I tell you. A glass. Your health, commandant! your health, Sganarelle! Give him some wine.

SGAN. I am not thirsty, sir.

JU. Drink, and sing us a song to gladden the commandant.

SGAN. I have a cold, sir.

JU. Never mind about that. Now then, come. And you (*to his servants*) accompany him.

STAT. Don Juan, it is enough; I invite you to come to supper with me to-morrow. Will you have the courage to do so?

JU. Yes, and I will go, accompanied only by Sganarelle.
SGAN. Many thanks, but it is a fasting day for me.
JU. (*to* SGANARELLE). Take this light.
STAT. He who is led by Heaven has no need of light.

ACT V.

(*The stage represents the country.*)

SCENE I.—DON LOUIS, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

LOU. What! my son, is it possible that merciful Heaven has heard my prayers? Is what you tell me true? Are you not deceiving me with false hopes? And may I trust the surprising news of such a conversion?

JU. Yes, you see me reclaimed from all my sins; I am no longer the same man I was yesterday, and Heaven has suddenly wrought in me a change which will be the wonder of everyone. It has touched my heart and opened my eyes, and I look back with horror on my long time of blindness, and on the criminal disorders of the life I have led. My mind dwells upon all its abominations, and I am astonished that Heaven has borne them so long, and has not made me feel its vengeance. I feel the mercy that has been shown me in my not being punished for my crimes, and I am ready to profit by it as I ought; to show to the world the sudden change in my life; thus to make up for the scandal of my past actions, and try to obtain a full pardon. Towards this will all my endeavours tend in future; and in order to help me in the new life I have chosen, I beseech you, sir, to choose for me a person who can help me, and under whose guidance I may be enabled to walk safely in the new path opened before me.

LOU. Ah! how easily the love of a father is recalled, and how quickly forgotten are the faults of a son at the mention of the word repentance! After what I have just heard, I remember no more all the sorrow you have caused me; everything is obliterated from my memory. My happiness is extreme, I weep for joy; all my dearest wishes are granted, and I have nothing else to ask of

Heaven. Let us embrace each other, my son. Persist, I beseech you, in this praiseworthy resolution. I will go at once and carry this good news to your mother, share with her my joy, and thank Heaven for the holy thoughts with which it has inspired you.

SCENE II.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

SGAN. Ah! sir, how happy I am to see you converted! I have been a long time looking forward for this; and, thank Heaven, all my wishes are satisfied.

JU. Plague take the booby!

SGAN. How, the booby?

JU. What! you take for ready-money what I have just said, and fancy that my lips agree with my heart?

SGAN. Why! it is not . . . . you do not . . . . Your . . . . (*aside*) Oh! what a man! what a man! what a man!

JU. Oh dear, no, I am not changed in the least, and all my thoughts are the same.

SGAN. You do not yield, after the marvellous miracle of that moving and speaking statue?

JU. There certainly is something about it which I do not understand; but whatever it may be, it can neither convince my judgment nor stagger my heart; and if I said that I wanted to reform my conduct and to lead an exemplary life, it is because of a plan I have formed out of pure policy, a useful stratagem, a necessary grimace to which I am willing to submit, in order not to give offence to a father I have need of, and to screen myself in respect to men from a hundred troublesome adventures which might happen to me. I am glad to take you into my confidence, Sganarelle, for I like to have a witness of what I feel, and of the real motives which oblige me to act as I do.

SGAN. What! you believe in nothing, and yet you mean to pass for a God-fearing man?

JU. And why not? there are plenty of others beside me who borrow the same feathers, and who use the same mask to deceive the world.

SGAN. (*aside*). Ah! what a man! what a man!

JU. There is no longer any shame in hypocrisy; it is a

fashionable vice, and all fashionable vices pass for virtues. To act the part of a good man is the best part one can act. The profession of hypocrisy has wonderful advantages. It is an art the imposture of which is always looked upon with respect; and although the world may see through the deceit, it dares say nothing against it. All the other vices of mankind are opened to censure, and everyone is at liberty to attack them boldly; but hypocrisy is a privileged vice which closes the mouth of everyone, and enjoys in peace a sovereign impunity. By dint of cant we enter into a kind of league with those of the same party, and whoever falls out with one of us has the whole set against him; whilst those who are really sincere, and who are known to be in earnest, are always the dupes of the others, are caught in the net of the hypocrites, and blindly lend their support to those who ape their conduct. You could hardly believe what a number of these people I know who with the help of such stratagem have put a decent veil over the disorders of their youth, have sought shelter under the cloak of religion, and under its venerated dress are allowed to be as wicked as they please. Although people are aware of their intrigues, and know them for what they are, their influence is none the less real. They are well received everywhere, and a low bending of the head, deep sighs, and rolling eyes, make up for all they can be guilty of. It is under this convenient dress that I mean to take refuge and put my affair to rights. I shall not give up my dear habits, but will carefully hide them, and avoid all show in my pleasures. If I am discovered, the whole cabal will take up my interests of their own accord, and will defend me against everybody. In short, it is the only safe way of doing all I like with impunity. I shall set up for a censor of other people's actions. I shall speak evil of everybody. If I am but ever so slightly offended, I shall never forgive, but bear an irreconcilable hatred. I shall make myself the avenger of the interests of Heaven, and under this convenient shelter I will pursue my enemies, will accuse them of impiety, and know how to let loose against them the officious zealots who, without understanding how the truth stands, will heap abuse upon them and damn them boldly on their own private authority. It is thus that we can profit by the

weaknesses of men, and that a wise man can accommodate himself to the vices of his age.

SGAN. O heavens! what do I hear? You only lacked hypocrisy to make you perfectly bad, and this is the height of abomination. Sir, this last thing is too much for me, and I cannot help speaking. Do to me all you please; beat me, break every bone in my body, kill me if you like, but I must speak out my thoughts, and like a faithful servant say what I ought. Know, sir, that the pitcher goes once too often to the well; and as that author, whose name I do not recollect, truly said, man is in this world like the bird on the branch: the branch is attached to the tree; whoever is attached to the tree follows good precepts; good precepts are better than fine words; fine words are found at court; at court are the courtiers; courtiers are followers of fashion; fashion comes from fancy; fancy is a faculty of the mind; the mind is life to us; life ends in death; death makes us think of Heaven; the sky is above the earth; the earth is not the sea; the sea is subject to tempests; tempests endanger ships; ships require pilots; a good pilot has prudence; prudence is not the gift of young men; young men ought to obey their elders; old men love riches; riches make people rich; the rich are not poor; the poor know what want is; necessity has no law; those who have no law live like the brute, and consequently you will be damned with all the devils.

JU. A noble argument.

SGAN. After this if you do not change, so much the worse for you.

SCENE III.—DON CARLOS, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

CAR. Don Juan, I meet with you opportunely, and I am glad to ask you in this place rather than in your house what resolutions you have taken. You know that this duty belongs to me, that I took it upon myself in your presence. I cannot hide from you that I should like the difficulty to be settled by gentle means; there is nothing I would not do to prevail upon you to choose the right path, and to see you publicly confirm your marriage with my sister.

Ju. *(in an hypocritical tone)*. Alas! I wish with all my heart that I could give you the satisfaction you ask for; but Heaven is directly opposed to it; it has inspired me with the design of reforming my mode of life, and I have now no other thoughts than to leave all earthly engagements, to forsake all vanities, to atone by an austere life for all the criminal disorders into which the heat of passion and blind youth have carried me.

Car. Your intentions, Don Juan, do not clash with what I propose; the company of a legitimate wife and the laudable thoughts Heaven has inspired you with, can well agree.

Ju. Alas! no. It is a decision which your sister herself has taken, for she has retired to a convent. Both our hearts were touched at the same time.

Car. Her retreat cannot satisfy us, for it might be imputed to the contempt you had thrown on her and her family; our honour requires that she should live openly with you.

Ju. I assure you that the thing is not possible. I had the greatest wish to do so, and even to-day I asked advice of Heaven about it; but when I consulted it, I heard a voice saying that I was not to think of your sister, and that with her for my companion I should certainly not work out my salvation.

Car. Do you think you will impose upon me with those fine excuses?

Ju. I obey Heaven's voice.

Car. What! you imagine that I can be satisfied with such stories as these?

Ju. Such is the will of Heaven.

Car. You make my sister leave her convent, and abandon her afterwards?

Ju. Heaven orders it should be so.

Car. We must bear such a disgrace?

Ju. Seek redress from Heaven.

Car. What! always Heaven?

Ju. It is the will of Heaven.

Car. Enough, Don Juan; I understand you. It is not here that I will attack you, the place will not admit of it, but I will soon find you out.

JU. You will do as you please. You know that I do not lack courage, and that I can use my sword when it is necessary. I will go in a few minutes through this narrow lane by the side of the convent; but I declare to you that I do not wish to fight: Heaven forbid I should think of such a thing; but if you attack me, we will see what will ensue.

CAR. We shall indeed see.

SCENE IV.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

SGAN. Sir, what is this new style you adopt? This is worse than all the rest put together; I had much rather see you as you were before. I always looked forward to your salvation before, but from henceforth I give up all hope, and I believe that Heaven, which has borne with you to this day, will never tolerate this last abomination.

JU. Come, come; Heaven is not so strict as you think, and if each time that men . . . .

SCENE V.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE; *a Spectre in the form of a veiled woman.*

SGAN. (*seeing the Spectre*). Ah! sir, Heaven speaks to you and warns you.

JU. This may be a warning from Heaven, but it must be expressed more clearly if I am to understand it.

SPEC. Don Juan has but a moment longer to profit by the mercy of Heaven; if he does not repent now, his destruction is certain.

SGAN. Sir, do you hear?

JU. Who dares speak such words to me? I think I know this voice.

SGAN. Ah! sir, it is a ghost. I know it by its way of walking.

JU. Ghost, phantom, or devil, I will see what it is. (*The Spectre changes shape, and represents Time with his scythe in his hand.*)

SGAN. O heavens! Do you see, sir, this change of shape?

JU. No, no; nothing can terrify me, and my sword will tell me whether this is body or spirit.

(*The Spectre disappears when* DON JUAN *tries to strike it.*)

SGAN. Ah! sir, yield to such repeated proofs.

JU. No, whatever may happen, it shall never be said that I could repent. Come, follow me.

SCENE VI.—THE STATUE OF THE COMMANDANT, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

STAT. Stop, Don Juan, you promised me yesterday to come and have supper with me.

JU. Yes; where shall we go?

SGAN. Give me your hand.

JU. Here it is.

STAT. Don Juan, obstinacy in sin brings after it a fearful death, and by rejecting the mercy of Heaven we open a way for its wrath.

JU. Oh heavens! what do I feel! an invisible fire consumes me, I can bear it no longer. My whole body is one ardent flame . . . . Oh! . . . . oh! . . . .

(*The lightning flashes around* DON JUAN, *and loud claps of thunder are heard. The earth opens and swallows him up. From the spot where he has disappeared burst forth flames of fire.*)

SCENE VII.—SGANARELLE (*alone*).

Ah! my wages! my wages! His death is a reparation to all. Heaven offended, laws violated, families dishonoured, girls ruined, wives led astray, husbands driven to despair, everybody is satisfied. I am the only one to suffer. My wages, my wages, my wages!

LOVE IS THE BEST DOCTOR.

(L'AMOUR MÉDECIN.)

'L'Amour Médecin' was acted for the first time on the 15th of September, 1665, at Versailles, and on the 22nd of the same month at the Palais Royal. The ignorance and quackery of the doctors of the seventeenth century were evils but too real. Molière only put on the stage what was known by everybody, although diverse reasons have been given for his evident contempt of the doctor's science. Four of the doctors represented were the first doctors of the Court. Boileau, at the request of Molière, gave them Greek names, which answered to their real characters.

Molière acted the part of Sganarelle.

TO THE READER.

This is but a simple sketch, a slight impromptu which it has pleased the king to make into an entertainment. It is the most hurried of all those that his Majesty has ever asked of me; and when I say that it was sketched, written, learnt, and acted in five days, I only speak the plain truth. It is hardly necessary to remark that it mostly depends on the acting. Everyone knows that comedies are written only to be acted, and I advise the reading of this one particularly, only to those who can at the same time imagine all the dumb show of the stage. One thing I must say I wish, that such works could always be seen with all the accessories with which they are represented before the king. This would greatly enhance the pleasure to be derived from them; and the airs and symphonies of the incomparable M. Lulli, added to the beauty of the voices and the agility of the dancers, give them charms which they can scarcely do without.

Molière.

PROLOGUE.

COMEDY, MUSIC, THE BALLET.

Comedy.

LET us cease this idle quarrel
Who can biggest gifts display,
Rather on a greater glory
Should we pride ourselves this day.
Let all unite, and noblest ardour show
To please the greatest king that earth can know.

All three together.

Let all unite, and noblest ardour show
To please the greatest king that earth can know.

Music.

From the labours none may credit
When with toil and care opprest;
Oft he deigns with us to dally,
With our gifts his soul to rest.

The Ballet.

Can there be a greater glory?
Can there be a joy more blest?

All three together.

Let all unite and, etc.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

SGANARELLE, *father to* LUCINDE.

CLITANDRE, *in love with* LUCINDE.

MR. GUILLAUME, *dealer in hangings.*

MR. JOSSE, *jeweller.*

MR. TOMÈS,
MR. DESFONANDRÈS,
MR. MACROTON,
MR. BAHIS,
MR. FILERIN,
} *doctors.*

A NOTARY.

CHAMPAGNE, *servant to* SGANARELLE.

LUCINDE, *daughter of* SGANARELLE.

AMINTE, *a neighbour.*

LUCRÈCE, SGANARELLE'S *niece.*

LISETTE, *maid to* LUCINDE.

The scene is in Paris, in SGANARELLE'S *house.*

LOVE IS THE BEST DOCTOR.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—SGANARELLE, AMINTE, LUCRÈCE, MR. GUILLAUME, MR. JOSSE.

SGAN. Ah! what a strange thing life is! Well may I say with the great philosopher of antiquity that prosperity and vanity are often lodged together, and that misfortunes never come alone! I had but one wife, and she is dead.

GUIL. How many, then, did you wish to have?

SGAN. She is dead, Guillaume, my friend. I feel her loss very much, and I cannot think of it without tears: I was not quite satisfied with her behaviour, and we had many quarrels together; but death puts many things to rights. She is dead, and I weep for her. If she were alive, we should still quarrel. Of all the children it pleased Heaven to give me, I have but one daughter left, and this daughter is my greatest trouble; for I see her plunged in the deepest melancholy, in a frightful sadness out of which there is no way of getting her. I cannot even know the cause of it; I feel quite upset with it all, and I have need of good advice on the subject. (*to* LUCRÈCE) You are my niece; (*to* AMINTE) you my neighbour; (*to* MR. GUILLAUME *and* MR. JOSSE) and you, my fellow companions and friends, pray advise me what I ought to do.

JOS. For my part, I hold that dress and adornment are what mostly make girls happy; if I were you, I should

buy her this instant a beautiful set of diamonds, rubies, or emeralds.

GUIL. If I were in your place, I should buy her some fine hangings representing a landscape or figures, and I should have them hung up in her room to rejoice her eyes and heart.

AMIN. As for me, I should take no such trouble; I should marry her right out without loss of time to that gentleman who, I am told, asked her hand a little while ago.

LUCR. And my opinion is, that your daughter is not at all a person fit to marry: her constitution is too delicate and she is not strong enough; you would soon send her into the next world if you exposed her to have children in her state of health. To live in the world would not do at all for her, and I advise you to send her to a nunnery, where she will find distractions that will suit her disposition much better.

SGAN. I must say that I think each piece of advice wonderfully wise, but not altogether disinterested, and that you all think of yourselves. You, Mr. Josse, are a jeweller, and your advice is that of a man who would rather be glad to get rid of some of his goods. You, Mr. Guillaume, sell hangings, and you seem to me as if you had some in your way. The man you love, Aminte my neighbour, has, it is said, a certain liking for my daughter, and you would not be sorry to see her the wife of another. And as for you, my dear niece, I have no intention, as it is well known, to marry my daughter to anyone; I have my own reasons for that; but the advice you give me to make a nun of her comes from one who charitably wishes to become my sole heiress. Thus, ladies and gentlemen, although your counsel in each case sounds the best in the world, you will allow me, I hope, not to follow it. (*aloné*) So much for the self-sacrificing advice of the world!

SCENE II.—LUCINDE, SGANARELLE.

SGAN. Ah! here is my daughter taking an airing. She does not see me. She sighs and looks up to Heaven. (*to* LUCINDE) God bless you! Good morning, my dear. Well! well! and how are you? What! still as sad and

melancholy as ever: and you won't tell me what is the matter with you? Come, open your little heart to me, my darling; tell, tell, tell all your little thoughts to your little deary papa. Out with it all! Shall I kiss you? Come, speak. (*aside*) I am beyond myself to see her like this. (*to* LUCINDE.) Tell me, do you wish to make me die of grief? will you not say why you are so sad? Tell me the cause, and I promise you I will do everything for you. Yes, only just tell me the cause of your sadness; and I assure you, I promise you that there is nothing which I will not do to satisfy you. Is not this enough? Are you jealous of any of your friends because she is better dressed than you? and is there any new stuff you would like to have a dress made of? No. Is not your room well-furnished enough? Do you wish for any cabinet from St. Laurent's fair? It is not that. Is there anything you wish to learn? Will you have a master to teach you the harpsichord? No. Do you love some one, and wish to be married?

(LUCINDE *makes a sign which means yes.*)

SCENE III.—SGANARELLE, LUCINDE, LISETTE.

LIS. Well, sir, you have been talking to your daughter; have you found out the cause of her melancholy?

SGAN. No, she is a naughty girl, and teases me beyond measure.

LIS. Leave it, sir, to me; I will try to sound her a little.

SGAN. It is of no use; and since she is like that, my opinion is that she had better be left quiet.

LIS. Let me manage it, I tell you. Perhaps she will tell me what it is, more easily than she will to you. What! Miss Lucinde, you will not tell us what is the matter with you, but will make everybody miserable? I think it is not right to act as you do; and if you do not feel inclined to open your heart to your father, you can say nothing against opening it to me. Tell me, is there anything you want him to give you? He has told us many a time that he would do anything to satisfy you. Do you not have as much liberty as you like? Have you a fancy for pleasant

walks and parties? Tell me if anybody has displeased you? Have you some secret lover, and do you wish your father to give him you in marriage? Ah! I see that's it. Why, in the world, make so much ado? The mystery is all solved, sir; and . . . .

SGAN. Go, ungrateful girl, I will never speak to you any more, and I leave you to your obstinacy.

LUC. Father, since you want me really to tell you what . . . .

SGAN. Yes, I have lost all love for you.

LIS. Sir, her melancholy . . . .

SGAN. She is a good-for-nothing hussy, who has determined to make me die of grief.

LUC. Father, I am most willing . . . .

SGAN. This is not the reward I might have expected for having brought you up as I have done.

LIS. But, sir . . . .

SGAN. I am in a terrible rage with her.

LUC. But, father . . . .

SGAN. I have no love left for you.

LIS. But, sir . . . .

SGAN. She is a hussy.

LIS. But . . . .

SGAN. An ungrateful child.

LIS. But . . . .

SGAN. A good-for-nothing baggage, who will not say what is the matter with her.

LIS. It is a husband she wants.

SGAN. (*affecting not to hear*). I give her up.

LIS. A husband.

SGAN. I detest her.

LIS. A husband.

SGAN. I disown her.

LIS. A husband.

SGAN. No, I won't hear another word.

LIS. A husband.

SGAN. No, I won't hear another word.

LIS. A husband.

SGAN. No, I won't hear another word.

LIS. A husband, a husband, a husband.

SCENE IV.—LUCINDE, LISETTE.

LIS. It is a true saying, that none are so deaf as those who won't hear.

LUC. Well, Lisette, you thought I was wrong to hide my sorrow, and that I had but to speak in order to see my father grant my wishes. You see for yourself now.

LIS. He is, indeed, an unkind man; and I must say that I should delight in playing him some trick. But, miss, how is it that you never told me till now the cause of your sorrow?

LUC. And what was the use of speaking of it sooner? Should I not be just as well off if I had kept it a secret all my life? Do you fancy that I had not foreseen all that has just happened, that I was not fully aware of all my father's notions about me, and that the refusal he sent to him who asked my hand through a friend, has not stifled all hope in my heart?

LIS. What! it is that stranger who asked you of your father, and for whom you . . . .

LUC. Perhaps it is not proper for a young girl to speak so plainly; but I must confess to you that if I were at liberty to choose anyone, that is the man I would marry. We have never spoken to each other as yet, and his lips have not told me of his love; but, wherever we have met, his looks and actions have spoken to me such a tender language, and his asking me of my father seemed to me so honourable, that I cannot help loving him in return; and yet you see to what my father's unkindness has reduced all this tenderness.

LIS. Come, trust me in this. Although I have reason to complain of you for not having spoken openly to me before, I will all the same assist your love, and, provided you have resolution enough . . . .

LUC. But what can I do against the authority of a father? and if he is inexorable to my wishes . . . .

LIS. There, there, you must not allow him to treat you like a young goose; and, provided honour be safe, one may free oneself from the tyranny of a father. What does he mean you to do? You are old enough to be married. Does he think you are made of marble? Come,

I tell you once more that I will assist your love. I take everything upon myself, and you will see that I am up to many tricks. But here is your father coming; let us go in. Leave it to me. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE V.—SGANARELLE (*alone*).

It is good sometimes to affect not to hear what we hear but too well, and I did wisely to ward off the declaration of a wish I have no intention of gratifying. Is there a greater tyranny than this custom people would bind on fathers; anything more absurd or ridiculous, than to heap up great wealth by dint of much labour and trouble, to bring up a daughter with the greatest tenderness and care, and all that, in order to give up both at a moment's notice to a man who is nothing to you? No, no, I will not submit to such a custom; and I mean to keep for myself both my daughter and my money.

SCENE VI.—SGANARELLE, LISETTE.

LIS. (*running on the stage, and pretending not to see* SGANARELLE). Ah! what a misfortune! Ah! poor Mr. Sganarelle, where can I find you?

SGAN. (*aside*). What is she saying?

LIS. (*still running*). Ah, unfortunate father! what will you do when you hear this news?

SGAN. (*aside*). What can it be?

LIS. My poor mistress!

SGAN. I am undone.

LIS. Ah!

SGAN. (*running after* LISETTE). Lisette!

LIS. What a misfortune!

SGAN. Lisette!

LIS. What an accident!

SGAN. Lisette!

LIS. What a mischance!

SGAN. Lisette!

LIS. (*stopping*). Ah, sir

SGAN. What is it?

LIS. Sir?

SGAN. What is the matter?

LIS. Your daughter . . . .

SGAN. Ah! ah!

LIS. Sir, pray don't cry like that, or you will make me laugh.

SGAN. Speak quickly, then.

LIS. Your daughter, quite shocked at the things you told her, and the terrible anger you showed against her, went up immediately to her room, and, her heart full of despair, she opened the window which looks upon the river . . . .

SGAN. Well?

LIS. . . . . and, looking up to heaven: "No," she said, "it is impossible for me to live if my father is angry with me; and, since he renounces me for his child, I must die."

SGAN. And she threw herself into . . . .

LIS. No, sir. She gently shut the window again, and went to lie down on her bed. There she began to weep most bitterly, and all of a sudden her face became pale, her eyes rolled, her heart ceased to beat, and so she remained in my arms.

SGAN. Oh, my daughter! She is dead, then?

LIS. No, sir. By dint of shaking her well, I brought her back to life; but the attack returns from time to time, and I believe she will be dead and gone before the day is over.

SGAN. Champagne! Champagne! Champagne!

(*Enter* CHAMPAGNE.)

SCENE VII.—SGANARELLE, CHAMPAGNE.

SGAN. Quick! go, and fetch the doctors. Bring plenty of them; we cannot have too many in such a terrible circumstance. Oh, my poor daughter! my poor daughter!

FIRST INTERLUDE.

CHAMPAGNE *knocks dancing, at the doors of the four doctors. The four doctors dance ceremoniously, then enter* SGANARELLE'S *house.*

ACT II.

Scene I.—Sganarelle, Lisette.

Lis. What do you mean to do, sir, with four doctors? Isn't one sufficient to kill anybody?

Sgan. Be silent; four opinions are better than one.

Lis. Cannot your daughter die without the help of those people?

Sgan. Do doctors make people die?

Lis. Certainly; and I knew a man who could prove with good reason that we should never say that So-and-so died of fever or pleurisy, but of four doctors and two apothecaries.

Sgan. Hush! you must not offend these gentlemen.

Lis. Why, sir, our cat recovered quite lately from an accidental fall she had from the top of the house into the street. She spent three days without eating, or moving head or tail; but it is very lucky that there are no cat doctors, for they would have done for her. They would have been sure to bleed and purge her.

Sgan. Hold your tongue, I say. Did you ever see such impertinence? Here they are.

Lis. Pay attention, and you will be greatly edified. They will tell you in Latin that your daughter is not well.

Scene II.—MM. Tomès, Desfonandrès, Macroton, Bahis; Sganarelle, Lisette.

Sgan. Well, gentlemen?

Tom. We have examined the patient very carefully, and there is no doubt that there are a great many impurities in her.

Sgan. My daughter is impure?

Tom. I mean to say that there are many impurities in her body; many corrupted humours.

Sgan. Ah! I understand.

Tom. We are going to consult together.

Sgan. Quick! some chairs.

Lis. (*to* Mr. Tomès). Ah, sir! so you are one of them!

SGAN. (*to* LISETTE). How came you to know this gentleman?

LIS. I saw him the other day at the house of a great friend of your niece.

TOM. How is her coachman?

LIS. Very well; he is dead.

TOM. Dead?

LIS. Yes.

TOM. The thing is not possible.

LIS. I don't know whether it is possible or not; but I know that he is dead.

TOM. He cannot be dead, I tell you.

LIS. And I tell you that he is dead and buried.

TOM. You are mistaken.

LIS. I saw him.

TOM. It is impossible. Hippocrates says that that kind of illness only ends on the fourteenth or the twenty-first day, and he has only been ill six days.

LIS. Hippocrates may say all he pleases, but the coachman is dead.

SGAN. Peace, chatterbox. Gentlemen, I pray you to consult carefully. Although it is not customary to pay beforehand, lest I should forget it and for the thing to be settled, please . . . . (*he gives them money, and each doctor, in receiving it, makes a different gesture*).

(*Exit* SGANARELLE.)

SCENE III.—THE DOCTORS (*they sit down and cough*).

DES. Paris is a very large town. One has to go long distances when one's practice is large.

TOM. I must say that I have a most splendid mule, and you would hardly believe the long distances I make him go every day.

DES. I have a wonderful horse; nothing can tire him.

TOM. Do you know the distance my mule has gone to-day? First, I went close to the Arsenal; from the Arsenal to the Faubourg St. Germain; from the Faubourg St. Germain to the end of the Marais; from the end of the Marais to the Porte St. Honoré; from the Porte St. Honoré to the Faubourg St. Jacques; from the Faubourg St. Jacques

to the Porte Richelieu; from the Porte Richelieu to this place; and from this place I have to go to the Place Royale again.

DES. My horse has done all that to-day, and I went, besides, to see a patient at Ruel.

TOM. But, by-the-bye, which side do you take in the dispute between the two doctors, Theophrastus and Artemius? For this affair divides the whole faculty into two camps.

DES. I am for Artemius.

TOM. And so am I. Of course his advice, as was clearly proved, killed his patient, while that of Theophrastus was certainly much better; but, in short, the latter was wrong, all the circumstances taken into consideration, and he should not have been of a different opinion from his senior. What do you say?

DES. You are quite right. We should never forget to fulfil all the formalities of professional etiquette, whatever may happen.

TOM. For my part, I stick to them like a leech, unless it be between friends. One day, three of us were called in, with an outsider,* for a consultation. I stopped all the proceedings, and would not suffer that any opinion should be given unless it was done according to etiquette. The people of the house were doing all they could, and the case grew worse every minute; but I would not yield one iota, and the patient died bravely during the dispute.

DES. It is quite right to teach people how to behave, and to show them their unfledged ignorance.

TOM. A dead man is but a dead man, and of no consequence; but a formality once neglected does great prejudice to the whole faculty.

† SCENE IV.—SGANARELLE, MM. TOMÈS, DESFONANDRÈS, MACROTON, BAHIS.

SGAN. Gentlemen, the oppression of my daughter is becoming worse; tell me quickly, I pray, what you have decided upon.

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* *Médecin du dehors:* a doctor who had not taken his degree in Paris.

† Molière makes an allusion in this scene to the consultation held at Vincennes for the dying Cardinal de Mazarin. Brayer said that it

TOM. (*to* DESFONANDRÈS). Come, sir.

DES. No, sir; it is for you to speak, if you please.

TOM. You are joking.

DES. I could not think of speaking first.

TOM. Sir.

DES. Sir.

SGAN. For mercy's sake, gentlemen, leave aside all these ceremonies, and remember that the danger is urgent.

(*They speak all four together.*)

TOM. The illness of your daughter . . . .

DES. The opinion of all these gentlemen . . . .

MAC. Af—ter ha—ving care—ful—ly con—sult—ed with . . . .

BA. To reason . . . .

SGAN. I pray you, gentlemen, speak one after the other.

TOM. Sir, we have duly argued upon your daughter's illness, and my opinion is, that it proceeds from a great heat in the blood. I therefore advise that she should be bled as soon as possible.

DES. And I say that her illness is caused by a putrefaction of humours, caused by too great a repletion. I therefore advise that she should take an emetic.

TOM. I maintain that an emetic will kill her.

DES. And I, that bleeding will cause her death.

TOM. It becomes you well to play the skilful doctor!

DES. Yes, it does, and I challenge you in all kinds of learning.

TOM. Remember the man you killed a few days ago.

DES. Remember the lady you sent into the other world three days since.

TOM. (*to* SGANARELLE). I have given you my opinion.

DES. (*to* SGANARELLE). I have given you my advice.

TOM. If your daughter is not bled immediately, you may look upon her as dead. (*Exit.*)

DES. If you have her bled, you will see her die in a quarter of an hour. (*Exit.*)

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was the spleen that was attacked: Guenant maintained it was the liver; Valot the lungs; and Desfongerais the mesentery. It was Valot who administered a dose of opium to Henrietta, wife of Charles I. of England, which, it is said, caused her death.

SCENE V.—SGANARELLE, MM. MACROTON, BAHIS.

SGAN. Which of the two am I to believe? and what decision am I to take upon two such different opinions? Gentlemen, I beseech you to guide me, and tell me, without being carried away by passion, what you think most likely to give my daughter relief.

MAC. (*drawling out his words*). Sir, in all such mat—ters, one should pro—ceed with cir—cum—spec—tion, and do no—thing in a hur—ry; for the mis—takes which may be com—mit—ted are, ac—cord—ing to Hip—po—cra—tes, of a dan—ger—ous con—se—quence.

BA. (*talking very fast and very indistinctly*). It is true that we must be careful what we do, for it is no child's play; and when once a man has failed, it is no easy matter to remedy the failure, and to put to rights what is spoilt; *experimentum periculosum.* That is why we must reason beforehand, duly weigh things, consider the constitution of the patient, examine the causes of the illness, and see what remedies are best for it.

SGAN. (*aside*). The first creeps like a tortoise, the second runs post haste.

MAC. Now, sir, in or—der to come to the point, I find that your daugh—ter's dis—ease is chro—nic, and that she may run great risk if no—thing is done for her; so much the more so, that the symp—toms she has are in—di—ca—tive of a fu—li—gi—nous and mor—di—cant va—pour which ir—ri—tates the mem—branes of the brains. Now this va—pour, which we name in Greek *at—mos*, is caused by cer—tain hu—mours, pu—trid, te—na—cious and con—glu—ti—nous, which are con—tain—ed in the low—er re—gions of the ab—do—men.

BA. And as these humours have been engendered during a long period of time, they have become hardened, and have acquired those malignant fumes which rise towards the region of the brain.

MAC. So much so, that in or—der to draw, de—tach, ex—tract, ex—pel, e—va—cu—ate the said hu—mours, a pow—er—ful pur—ga—tive will be ne—ces—sa—ry. But to pre—pare the way, I think it right, and there is no ob—jec—tion, to make use of some small a—no—dyne

re—me—dies; that is to say, small, e—mol—lient, de—ter—sive clys—ters, and re—fresh—ing ju—leps and sy—rups, which will be put in her tisane.

BA. Afterwards we will try purgatives and bleeding, which we will repeat if there is need.

MAC. It is still pos—si—ble that, not—with—stand—ing all this, your daugh—ter may die, but at least you will have done some—thing, and you will have the con—so—la—tion of know—ing that she has died in due form.

BA. It is better to die whilst following the rules than to escape whilst violating them.

MAC. We have told you our o—pi—nion in all sin—cer—i—ty.

BA. And we have spoken to you as if you were our brother.

SGAN. (*to* MR. MACROTON, *drawling out his words*). I ren—der you my most hum—ble thanks. (*to* MR. BAHIS, *speaking very fast and very indistinctly*) And I am infinitely obliged to you for the trouble you have taken.

SCENE VI.—SGANARELLE (*alone*).

SGAN. All they have done is to make me more uncertain than before. Heigho! a new idea has just occurred to me. I will go and buy some orvietan, and make her take it; it is a remedy which has done much good to a great many people.

SCENE VII.—SGANARELLE, A QUACK.

SGAN. I beg of you, sir, to sell me a box of your orvietan, for which I will pay you at once.

QUACK (*sings*).

Could the gold of all lands that are washed by the sea
Ever pay for the secret important I bear?
My remedy cures by its excellence rare
More evils than told in a year could e'er be.

The itch,
The scurf,
The fever,
The plague,

The gout,
Small-pox,
Hernia,
Measles.
O great is the power of my Orvietan.

SGAN. Sir, I believe that all the gold in the world would not pay for your remedy; however, here is half-a-crown which you can take if you like.

QUACK (*sings*).

My bounty admire, for so little I vend
This marvellous treasure bestowed by my hand;
Therewith you may ever, by sea or by land,
Brave safely all ills that the heavens can send.

The itch,
The scurf,
The fever,
The plague,
The gout,
Small-pox,
Hernia,
Measles.
O great is the power of my Orvietan.

SECOND INTERLUDE.

Several Trivelins and Scaramouches,* servants of the Quack, show their joy by dancing.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—MM. FILERIN, TOMÈS, DESFONANDRÈS.

FIL. Are you not ashamed, gentlemen, to have shown so little prudence for people of your age, and to have quarrelled like two young madcaps? Do you not see

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* Buffoons of the Italian comedy.

what harm such disputes do us in the world, and is it not enough that learned men should see the want of agreement and difference of opinions which exist between the authors of our time and our ancient masters, without our showing by our quarrels the knavery of our art? For my part, I understand nothing of the mischievous policy of some of our brethren, and we must acknowledge that all these contentions have of late done us a great deal of harm, and if we are not more careful we shall bring about our own ruin. I do not speak for myself, for, thank Heaven, I have managed my own affairs pretty well; let the wind blow, let the rain or hail come down, those who are dead are dead, and I have enough money now to be independent of the living; but, to say the least, all these disputes do no good to our calling. Since it is the will of Heaven that for so many centuries men should have been infatuated with us, let us not ourselves destroy their illusions with our noisy cabals, but profit as much as we can by their foolishness. You know that we are not the only people who try to build on the weaknesses of mankind. It is the study of half the world, and everyone tries to take their fellow-men by their weak side, and to extract some profit from them. Flatterers, for instance, seek to profit by the love men have of praise, by giving them all the vain incense they wish for; and it is an art by the help of which, as we can see every day, large fortunes are made. Alchemists try to profit by the passion men have for riches, by promising mountains of gold to those who listen to them. Fortune-tellers, with deceitful predictions, profit by the vanity and ambition of credulous minds. But the greatest weakness men are subject to, is the love they have for life; and we profit by it. With our pompous jargon we know how to take advantage of the veneration for our trade the fear of death impresses on them. Let us keep ourselves, then, in the place of respect which their weakness has given us, and let us agree before our patients so as to ascribe to ourselves whatever happy termination their illnesses may have had, and throw upon Nature all the blunders of our science. Let us not foolishly destroy their fortunate fondness for an error which provides bread for so many people, and which,

with the money of those we kill, allows us to raise noble heritages for ourselves.

TOM. You are perfectly right in what you say; but passion will out sometimes, in spite of oneself.

FIL. Now, come, gentlemen, give up all animosity and make peace at once.

DES. I am most willing. Let him agree to an emetic for this patient, and I will agree to whatever he likes for the next.

FIL. Nothing can be better; this is a fair compromise.

TOM. Very well, let it be so.

FIL. Shake hands, then; and be more prudent another time.

SCENE II.—MM. TOMÈS, DESFONANDRÈS, LISETTE.

LIS. What! gentlemen, you are here, and you do not think of redressing the wrong that has just been done to the faculty of medicine!

TOM. How! What is it?

LIS. An insolent wretch has had the impudence to encroach upon your trade, and without your prescription has just killed a man by running a sword through his body.

TOM. So, so, you are trying to laugh at us, but you will pass through our hands one of these days.

LIS. When I have recourse to you, I give you leave to kill me. (*Exeunt* DOCTORS.)

SCENE III.—CLITANDRE (*dressed as a doctor*), LISETTE.

CLIT. Well, Lisette, what do you say to my get-up? Do you think that I can take in the old man with this dress? Do I look well?

LIS. Nothing could be better; and I was looking forward to your arrival with the greatest impatience. In fact, Heaven has given me a most soft heart, and I cannot see two lovers sigh for one another without having a feeling of tender charity towards them and an ardent desire of relieving their sufferings. I am resolved, cost what it may, to free Lucinde from the tyranny she is groaning

under, and to put her in your power. You pleased me from the first moment I saw you; I understand people well, and I know that she cannot make a better choice. Love attempts many extraordinary things, and we have concocted together a plan which may answer our purpose. The man we have to deal with is not one of the brightest; and if this scheme fails, we shall try others until we succeed. Wait one moment for me here. I will come back to fetch you directly.

(CLITANDRE *retires to the back part of the stage.*)

SCENE IV.—SGANARELLE, LISETTE.

LIS. Ah! sir, rejoice with me.

SGAN. What is it now?

LIS. Rejoice.

SGAN. What for?

LIS. Rejoice, I tell you.

SGAN. First tell me what for, and then I may, perhaps, rejoice.

LIS. No, I want you to rejoice beforehand; you must sing and dance.

SGAN. But why?

LIS. Because I tell you.

SGAN. Well, then (*he sings and dances*), La, lera, la, la, la, lera, la. What the deuce! Will that do?

LIS. Your daughter is cured.

SGAN. My daughter is cured!

LIS. Yes. I bring you a doctor, a first-rate doctor, one who works marvellous cures, and who is far above all the other doctors.

SGAN. Where is he?

LIS. I will go and fetch him. (*Exit.*)

SGAN. (*alone*). We must see if this one will do more than the others.

SCENE V.—CLITANDRE, SGANARELLE, LISETTE.

LIS. (*bringing* CLITANDRE). Here he is.

SGAN. Here is a doctor with a chin smooth enough.

LIS. Science is not measured by the beard; his skill doesn't lie in his chin.

SGAN. Sir, I am told that you have wonderful remedies to make people . . . .

CLIT. Sir, my remedies differ from those of others. They use emetics, bleeding, drugs and injections, but I cure by words, sounds, with the help of letters, talismans, and constellated rings.

LIS. Did I not tell you so?

SGAN. This is a great man!

LIS. Sir, your daughter is close by, ready dressed, seated in a chair; I will make her come here.

SGAN. Yes, do.

CLIT. (*feeling* SGANARELLE'S *pulse*). Your daughter is very ill.

SGAN. How do you know that?

CLIT. Through the sympathy which exists between father and daughter.

SCENE VI.—SGANARELLE, LUCINDE, CLITANDRE, LISETTE.

LIS. (*to* CLITANDRE). Here, sir, there is a chair close to her. (*to* SGANARELLE) Let us leave them alone together.

SGAN. Why? I shall stay here.

LIS. Are you joking? We must go away. A doctor has a hundred things to ask that are not proper for a man to hear. (SGANARELLE *and* LISETTE *go farther back.*)

CLIT. (*aside to* LUCINDE). Ah! what delight can equal mine! and how difficult for me to begin with what I have to tell you! As long as my looks alone could tell you of my love, it seemed as if I had a thousand things to say to you; and now that I am free to speak to you as I wished, my feelings find no utterance, and the excess of my joy stifles all my words of love.

LUC. I can tell you the same thing; I experience, like you, feelings of joy which prevent me from speaking.

CLIT. Ah! how happy I should be if you felt for me what I feel for you, and if I could judge of your heart by my own! But, at least, may I believe that it is to you I owe the thought of this stratagem which gives me the joy of being near you.

LUC. Although the thought is not mine, at least I have gladly approved of it.

SGAN. (*to* LISETTE). He seems to me to keep himself very close to her.

LIS. (*to* SGANARELLE). He is examining her countenance and all her features.

CLIT. Will you be constant in all the affection you show me now?

LUC. But will you persist in the resolutions you have taken?

CLIT. Till death! I have no greater wish than to be yours, and I will show it in all I am going to do.

SGAN. (*to* CLITANDRE). Well! and our patient? She seems a little more cheerful.

CLIT. It is because I have made use with her of a remedy which my art has taught me. As the mind has a great influence over the body, and as illnesses often proceed from it, my custom is to think of the mind before I do anything for the body. I have therefore examined her looks, her features, and the lines of her hands; and with the help of the science I possess from Heaven, I find that it is her mind which is affected, and that her illness proceeds from a disordered imagination, a depraved desire to marry. As for myself, I know of nothing more extravagant and more ridiculous than this hankering after marriage . . .

SGAN. (*aside*). A clever man, this!

CLIT. And I always have had, and ever shall have, a horrible aversion for marriage.

SGAN. (*aside*). A great doctor, this!

CLIT. However, as one must flatter the imagination of patients, and as I see in your daughter signs of distress of mind that would be dangerous if prompt remedies were not administered, I have made use of her own fancies, and have told her that I was here to ask her of you in marriage. Then her face changed in a moment, her complexion cleared up, and her eyes brightened. If you keep up that delusion in her for a few days, you will see that we shall save her.

SGAN. Indeed, I am most willing.

CLIT. After that we will use other remedies to cure her entirely of these fancies.

SGAN. Quite right!—Well, my daughter, here is a gentleman who wishes to marry you, and I have told him that I am most willing.

LUC. Alas! is it possible?

SGAN. Yes.

LUC. But really?

SGAN. Yes, yes.

LUC. (*to* CLITANDRE). What! are you willing to be my husband?

CLIT. Yes.

LUC. And does my father consent to it?

SGAN. Yes, my child.

LUC. Ah! I am truly happy, if it is really so!

CLIT. Do not doubt it for one moment; my love for you does not date from to-day, and I have long wished to be your husband. I came here on purpose, and if you wish to know the whole truth, this dress is but a mere disguise, and I only acted the doctor that I might the better obtain what I desire.

LUC. You give me marks of real affection, and I am as grateful as I can be.

SGAN. (*aside*). Oh! the foolish, foolish, foolish girl!

LUC. You are willing, then, father, to give me this gentleman for my husband?

SGAN. Yes, yes; come, give me your hand. Give me yours also, sir, to see.

CLIT. But, sir . . . . (*holding back*).

SGAN. (*choking with laughter*). No, no, it is to . . . . (*stifling his laugh*) to soothe her mind. Shake hands, both of you. There, the affair is settled.

CLIT. Accept as a gage of my faith this ring, which I give you. (*to* SGANARELLE) It is a constellated ring, which cures all delusions of the mind.

LUC. Let us write the contract, then, so that nothing be wanting.

CLIT. Alas! I will do so, if you like. (*aside to* SGANARELLE) I will call up the man who writes my prescriptions, and tell her he is a notary.

SGAN. Very well.

CLIT. Ho! there! send up the notary I brought with me.

LUC. What! you had brought a notary with you?

CLIT. Yes.

LUC. How pleased I am!

SGAN. Oh! the foolish, foolish, foolish girl!

SCENE VII.—THE NOTARY, CLITANDRE, SGANARELLE, LUCINDE, LISETTE. (CLITANDRE *whispers to the* NOTARY.)

SGAN. (*to the* NOTARY). Yes, sir, you must draw up a contract for these two young people. Write it. (*to* LUCINDE) He is writing the contract. (*to the* NOTARY) I give her twenty thousand crowns on her marriage. Write it down.

LUC. I am so much obliged to you, father.

NOT. It is done. You have only to sign.

SGAN. That is a quickly got up contract.

CLIT. (*to* SGANARELLE). But, sir, at least . . . .

SGAN. No, no, I tell you; I know . . . . (*to the* NOTARY) Come, give her the pen to sign. (*to* LUCINDE) Now, sign, sign, sign your name: sign, sign; I will sign by and by.

LUC. No, no, I want to have it all to myself in my own hands.

SGAN. Well, here; (*after having signed*) are you satisfied?

LUC. More than you can imagine.

SGAN. All right, then; all right.

CLIT. Besides, I have not only taken the precaution of bringing a notary, but I have also brought musicians and dancers to celebrate the wedding, and to add to our enjoyment. Make them come. They are people I take everywhere with me, and who help me every day to pacify with their harmony and dancing the troubles of the mind.

SCENE VIII.—SGANARELLE, LUCINDE, CLITANDRE, LISETTE.

[THIRD INTERLUDE.]

COMEDY, THE BALLET, MUSIC, PLAY, LAUGHTER, PLEASURE.

COMEDY, THE BALLET, MUSIC, *sing together*:—

All mankind without our skill
Sorrowful would be and ill;
In us the best physicians see,
Ballet, Music, and Comedy.

COMEDY:—

If we are called upon, your spleen
By gentle means to cure,

To remedy with skill and care
The sickness you endure;
Then leave Hippocrates, whose help is vain,
And come to us a sure relief to gain.

ALL THREE TOGETHER:—

All mankind without our skill
Sorrowful would be and ill;
In us the best physicians see,
Ballet, Music, and Comedy.

(*Whilst* PLAY, LAUGHTER, *and* PLEASURE *dance*, CLITANDRE *leads off* LUCINDE.)

SCENE IX.—SGANARELLE, LISETTE (*and as above*).

SGAN. This is a pleasant way of curing people! But where are my daughter and the doctor?

LIS. They are gone together to complete the marriage

SGAN. How! The marriage?

LIS. Well, sir, the springe has caught the woodcock. You thought you were doing it all in fun, but it was in earnest.

SGAN. How the deuce! (*wants to run after* CLITANDRE *and* LUCINDE; *the dancers stop him*) Let me go; let me go, I say (*dancers still stop him*) again! (*They try to make him dance.*) Plague take you all!

THE MISANTHROPE.

(LE MISANTHROPE.)

'Le Misanthrope' is perhaps the masterpiece of Molière. In it he does not confine himself to the pictures of the absurdities and manners of his times, but depicts those weaknesses of the human heart which belong to all ages. The perfect style and language, the true delineation of character, and the noble thoughts, will always make the 'Misanthrope' rank among the best comedies that have ever been written. It was played for the first time on the 4th of June, 1666, at the Theatre of the Palais Royal.

Molière acted Alceste; his wife Célimène.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

ALCESTE, *in love with* CÉLIMÈNE.

PHILINTE, *friend to* ALCESTE.

ORONTE, *in love with* CÉLIMÈNE.

ACASTE, CLITANDRE, } *marquises.*

CÉLIMÈNE, *beloved by* ALCESTE.

ELIANTE, *cousin to* CÉLIMÈNE.

ARSINOË, *friend to* CÉLIMÈNE.

BASQUE, *servant to* CÉLIMÈNE.

DUBOIS, *servant to* ALCESTE.

*An Officer of the Maréchaussée of France.**

The scene is at Paris in CÉLIMÈNE'S *house.*

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* The Marshals of France had their own court, and were judges in all affairs of honour. *La Maréchaussée publique*, a kind of police on horseback, was called *gendarmerie* at the beginning of the Revolution of 1789.

THE MISANTHROPE.

ACT I.

Scene I.—Philinte, Alceste.

Phil. What is it? What can be the matter with you?

Alc (*seated*). Out of my sight!

Phil. But still, tell me what new whim . . . .

Alc. Leave me, I tell you, and go and hide yourself.

Phil. But you might, at any rate, listen to me without getting angry.

Alc. I will be angry, and I will not listen.

Phil. I hardly understand you, Alceste, in your sudden outburst of spleen; and although we are friends, I am one of the first . . . .

Alc. (*rising abruptly*). I, your friend! No: strike my name from off your list, if you please: I have certainly, till now, professed to be so, but after what I have just discovered in you, I tell you plainly that I am your friend no longer. I have no wish for a place in corrupt hearts.

Phil. I am very guilty, it seems, Alceste.

Alc. Guilty! you ought to die of mere shame. There is no possible excuse for such an action, and every man of honour would set his face against it. I find you overwhelming a man with caresses and professing for him the utmost tenderness. I find you adding to the transport of your embraces protestations, offers, vows of devotion, yet when afterwards I ask you who the man is, you can hardly tell me his name; your love for him vanishes the moment you leave him, and you speak of him as of a person entirely indifferent to you. 'Sdeath! it is an unworthy,

cowardly, base thing to demean oneself so far as to belie one's own feelings; and if I had been unfortunate enough to have done such a thing, I would, out of sheer grief, go at once and hang myself.

PHIL. I really do not see that this is a case of hanging, and I most humbly beg you will allow me to mitigate a little the severity of your sentence, so that I need not go and hang myself for this matter, if you please.

ALC. How unseemly this jesting of yours!

PHIL. But, seriously, what would you have me do?

ALC. I would have you be sincere; and, like a man of honour, never speak a word that does not come from the heart.

PHIL. When a man comes joyfully to embrace you, it is but right to pay him back in his own coin, respond, as well as you can, to his ardour, and return him offer for offer and promise for promise.

ALC. No, I cannot endure this contemptible custom affected by most of you men of fashion, and there is nothing I hate so much as the grimaces of all those great protestation-mongers, those obsequious dealers of unmeaning embraces, those obliging utterers of empty words, who vie with each other in civilities, and treat in the same manner the honourable man and the vain fool. What advantage do you find in being the object of the endearments of a man who makes vows to you of friendship, faith, zeal, esteem, tenderness; who crushes you with promises; who bestows on you a brilliant encomium; when he rushes to do the same to the first snob he meets? No, no one who respects himself would care for esteem so debased; and even that which we most prize has little value if it includes the whole human race. Friendship should be based on esteem, but to esteem everybody is to esteem nobody. Since you yield to these vices of the age, 'sdeath! I will have nothing to do with you. I utterly reject the condescending affability which makes no distinctions of merit. I wish to be loved for myself; and, to cut the matter short, the friend of all mankind is no friend of mine.

PHIL. But while we are in the world, we must pay a few outward civilities which custom demands.

ALC. No, I tell you; we should pitilessly condemn this shameful display of hollow friendships. I would have every one acquit himself like a man; under every circumstance speak his mind freely, and never allow his real feelings to disguise themselves under vain compliments.

PHIL. There are many cases when unreserved frankness would be both ridiculous and objectionable; and sometimes,—no offence to your austere honour,—it is right to conceal the thoughts we have. Would it be proper and befitting to tell a hundred people about us, what we think of them? And when we have to do with a man we hate, or who displeases us, ought we to go and tell him the plain facts of the case?

ALC. Yes.

PHIL. What! you would tell that ancient dame, Emilia, that at her age it is not becoming to set up for a beauty, and that the paint she lays on, shocks everybody?

ALC. Certainly.

PHIL. You would tell Dorilas that he is too importunate, and that everyone at Court is tired of hearing him relate his own deeds of bravery, and speak of the greatness of his house?

ALC. Decidedly.

PHIL. You are joking.

ALC. I am not; and on this point I will spare no one. My eyes are too much offended, and, whether at Court or in town, I find only objects to provoke my wrath. To see men behave as they do makes me a prey to melancholy and deep grief. I find everywhere nothing but base flattery, injustice, self-interest, treachery, and deceit. I can bear it no longer, and my intention is to break with all mankind.

PHIL. This philosophical moroseness is somewhat too fierce. Pray excuse me, if I laugh to see you in these gloomy fits, and I can fancy I see in us two, brought up under the same care, those brothers which 'The School for Husbands' describes, and of whom . . . .

ALC. Good heavens! spare me your insipid comparisons.

PHIL. Come, seriously, cease to give way to these vagaries, for all the trouble you may take will not alter the world. Since plain speaking has such charms for

you, I will tell you frankly that wherever you go, people laugh at this morbid temper of yours; that so much anger against the customs of the times makes you ridiculous in the eyes of a great many.

ALC. So much the better, I say, so much the better; it is all I ask for, it is a very good sign in my favour, and I rejoice at it. Men are all alike, so odious to me, that I should be very sorry for their good opinion.

PHIL. You are greatly incensed against human nature!

ALC. Yes, I have conceived for it an intense hatred.

PHIL. Will all poor mortals, without exception, be included in this great hatred? There are surely some in our days . . . .

ALC. No, there are no exceptions, and I hate all men alike. Some because they are wicked and mischievous; others, because they are lenient towards the wicked, and do not bear to them that deep contempt which vice ought to inspire in honest hearts. You can see to what an unjust excess this toleration is carried in the case with that downright villain, against whom I have a lawsuit. Everybody can see through the mask of the treacherous rascal; he is known everywhere for what he is; and his soft looks and honied words only deceive those to whom he is a stranger. Everyone knows that this abject scoundrel, who deserves to be exposed, has pushed his way in the world through mean and dirty jobs; and that the lofty position to which these have brought him, makes merit repine and virtue blush. Whatever shameful epithets you may apply to him, there is no one to take up the defence of his wretched honour; call him infamous cheat, and cursed villain: everyone agrees to it, and nobody contradicts you; yet his face is everywhere welcome; he is received and entertained everywhere; people smile upon him; he worms himself into every society; and if by canvassing there is any preferment to be competed for, you will see him carry it off over the heads of the most honest. 'Sdeath! this tampering with vice kills me, and I am seized at times with a terrible longing to fly away into some desert, far from the approach of men.

PHIL. Alas! let us trouble ourselves less about the manners of the age, and have a little indulgence for

human nature. Let us not examine it with such severity; but look with more forbearance upon its defects. The world requires a more pliant virtue, and we may err through too much zeal. A sound judgment avoids all extremes, and bids us be wise with moderation. The unbending severity of the virtues of olden times clashes too much with the customs and manners of our age. It requires too much perfection in mortals; we should yield to the times without obstinacy, and it is the greatest of follies to wish to reform all mankind. I, like you, notice every day a hundred things which would be better if ordered otherwise. But whatever I may discover at each step, men do not see me breaking forth into anger as you do; I take them quietly as they are, I accustom myself to bear with what they do, and I believe that, whether at Court or in the city, my placidity is as philosophical as your wrath.

ALC. But this placidity, sir—you who reason so well—will nothing ruffle this same placidity? If, perchance, a friend should betray you; if, in order to get your property, a trap were laid, or injurious reports spread about; would you see all this without indignation?

PHIL. Yes, I look upon those defects so offensive to your mind as vices inherent in human nature, and my mind is no more shocked at seeing a man dishonest, unjust, and selfish, than at seeing vultures ravenous after carnage, monkeys mischievous, and wolves greedy of blood.

ALC. What! Shall I see myself deceived, slandered, robbed, without being . . . . 'Sdeath! I will not speak to you at all, when your reasoning is so full of folly.

PHIL. You would indeed do well to keep silence. Rail a little less against your adversary, and bestow more care on your lawsuit.

ALC. I will bestow none upon it; of that I am determined.

PHIL. But whom can you expect to plead for you?

ALC. Whom? Reason, my just right, equity.

PHIL. Will you not see any of the judges?

ALC. Why should I? Is my cause unjust or doubtful?

PHIL. I agree with you that it is not; but the league against you is serious and . . . .

ALC. I am resolved not to move a step in the matter. Either I am right or I am wrong.

PHIL. Do not be over-confident.

ALC. I will not stir.

PHIL. Your adversary is powerful, and may by his intrigues persuade . . . .

ALC. I care not.

PHIL. You will do wrong.

ALC. Be it so. We shall see what comes of it.

PHIL. But . . . .

ALC. I shall have the pleasure of losing my lawsuit.

PHIL. But still . . . .

ALC. I shall see in this trial whether men will have impudence enough—will be wicked, villanous, and perverse enough—to do me this injustice in the face of the whole world.

PHIL. What a man!

ALC. I would give up a great deal to have the pleasure of losing my suit.

PHIL. If people heard you speak in that way, they would laugh at you in good earnest, Alceste.

ALC. So much the worse for those who laughed.

PHIL. But this rectitude which you claim so loudly; this thorough-going integrity, in which you intrench yourself, do you find them in her you love? Being, as it seems, so much at variance with the whole human race, I am greatly astonished that, in spite of all that can render it odious, you have chosen in it what charms your eyes. What surprises me still more, is the strange choice which your heart has made. The sincere Eliante is kindly disposed towards you, the prude Arsinoë casts longing eyes upon you; yet you reject their vows, and suffer yourself to be led in chains by Célimène, whose coquettish disposition and malicious wit are so much in accordance with the manners of our age! How is it that, bearing such deep hatred to these manners, you can put up with them in the person you love? In so sweet a charmer are they no longer failings? Are you blind to them, or do you excuse them?

ALC. No. My love for this young widow does not make me blind to her faults; and however great may be

the passion I have for her, I am the first to see them and to blame them. I confess my weakness, for, in spite of myself, she has the art of pleasing me. It is in vain that I see her defects, and in vain that I blame her for them: I love her in spite of all her imperfections; her charms prove stronger than I. But that my sincere love will purify her heart of all the vices of the times, I have no doubt.

PHIL. If you succeed in that, you will do no small thing. So you really believe that she loves you?

ALC. Indeed I do! I should not love her if I did not think so.

PHIL. But if you are so sure of her love, why do your rivals cause you such uneasiness?

ALC. It is because a heart deeply in love claims all for itself. I am here to-day simply with the object of telling her what my feelings are on this point.

PHIL. As far as I am concerned, it is her cousin Eliante I would love. Her heart, which holds you in great esteem, is truthful and sincere, and you would have made in her a much wiser choice.

ALC. It is true; my reason tells me so every day, but reason does not rule love.

PHIL. I have great misgivings about your passion, and your hope might . . . .

SCENE II.—ORONTE, ALCESTE, PHILINTE.

ORON. (*to* ALCESTE). I learnt just now that Eliante and Célimène are gone out to make some purchases; but, as I was also told that you were here, I came up to say, in all sincerity of heart, that I have conceived for you an incredible esteem; and that, for a long time, this esteem has given me an ardent desire to be numbered among your friends. Yes, I love to render justice to true merit, and I long to be united to you in the close bond of friendship. I think that a warm friend, and one of my standing, is assuredly not to be despised. (*During this discourse of* ORONTE, ALCESTE *is thoughtful, and does not seem aware that he is spoken to, until* ORONTE *says to him*) With your leave, it is to you that I am speaking.

ALC. To me, sir?

ORON. To you. Does it in any way wound your feelings?

ALC. Not in the least; but my surprise is great. I did not expect this homage to be paid to me.

ORON. The esteem I feel for you ought not to surprise you, and you can claim it from the whole world . . . .

ALC. Sir . . . .

ORON. The whole kingdom contains no merit more dazzling than that which is to be found in you.

ALC. Sir . . . .

ORON. Yes. I consider you superior to the highest amongst us.

ALC. Sir . . . .

ORON. May Heaven strike me dead if I lie! And in order to convince you of my feelings, allow me, in this place, to embrace you with all my heart, and to solicit a place in your affections. Come, your hand, if you please. Will you promise me your friendship?

ALC. Sir . . . .

ORON. What! you refuse me?

ALC. Sir, it is too great an honour you wish to pay me; but friendship requires a little more caution, and we surely profane its name when we lightly make use of it. Such a compact ought to spring from judgment and choice, and before we bind ourselves we ought to be better acquainted. Our dispositions might differ so greatly as to make us both heartily repent of the bargain.

ORON. Upon my word, you speak like a sensible man, and I esteem you all the more for it. Let us then leave the forming of such pleasant ties to time; but meanwhile believe that I am entirely at your service. If some overture is to be made for you at Court, everyone knows that I am in favour with the king, that I have his private ear, and that really he behaves in all things most kindly to me. In short, believe that I am in everything and at all times at your disposal. As you are a man of great judgment, I come, by way of beginning this happy bond of friendship, to read you a sonnet which I have lately composed, and to ask you if I should do well to publish it.

ALC. Sir, I am ill qualified to decide on such a matter; pray excuse me.

ORON. Why?

ALC. I have the weakness of being a little too sincere about those things.

ORON. Sincerity is what I ask of you; and I should have reason to complain if, when I come to you in order to hear the plain truth, you frustrate my purpose by concealing anything from me.

ALC. If it is thus you look upon it, sir, I consent.

ORON. *Sonnet.* It is a sonnet . . . . *Hope* . . . . It is a lady who had given some encouragement to my love. *Hope* . . . . These are not those long, pompous verses; but soft, tender, languishing little lines (*at every one of these interruptions he looks at* ALCESTE).

ALC. We shall see.

ORON. *Hope* . . . . I do not know whether the style will seem clear and easy to you, and whether you will be satisfied with my choice of words.

ALC. We shall see, sir.

ORON. Besides, you must know that I was only a quarter of an hour composing it.

ALC. Come, sir, time has nothing to do with the matter.

ORON. (*reads*).

Hope, it is true, can ease our pain *
And rock awhile our hapless mind,
But, Phyllis, what a sorry gain
When nothing pleasant walks behind.

PHIL. I think this beginning charming!

ALC. (*aside to* PHILINTE). What! you dare to find that charming?

ORON. *Your complaisance was great indeed,*
But better 'twere to clip its scope,
And not to such expense proceed,
If you could give me—only hope.

PHIL. Ah! in what charming terms those things are said!

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* The sonnet is thought to have been written by Benserade.

ALC. (*aside to* PHILINTE). Shame on you, you vile flatterer! you praise that rubbish?

ORON. *If age—long expectation's pest—*
The ardour of my zeal must test,
To death at last I'll fly.
My purpose braves your ev'ry care;
Fair Phyllis, men will soon despair
When doomed to hope for aye.

PHIL. The fall is pretty, lovable, admirable.

ALC. (*aside to* PHILINTE). Plague take your fall,* wretched sycophant! Deuce take you! I wish it had broken your neck.

PHIL. I have never heard verses so skilfully turned.

ALC. (*aside*). Zounds!

ORON. (*to* PHILINTE). You are flatteing and you think perhaps . . . .

PHIL. No, indeed, I am not flattering you at all.

ALC. (*aside*). Ha! what else are you doing, impostor?

ORON. (*to* ALCESTE). But you, you remember the agreement we made, and I beg of you to speak to me in all sincerity.

ALC. Sir, this is at all times a delicate matter, and we always like people to praise us for our genius. But one day I was saying to some one, whose name I will not mention, on seeing verses of his composition, that a gentleman should carefully guard against the hankering after authorship which is apt to seize us; that he should check the great propensity we have of making a display of such pastimes; and that by too great an eagerness to show our productions we run the risk of making ourselves ridiculous.

ORON. Do you mean me to understand by this that I am wrong in wishing . . . .

ALC. I do not say that. But I said to him that a lifeless composition is very wearisome to those who read it; that such a weakness is sufficient to make a man the object of unkind remarks: that, although in other respects he may have the most sterling qualities, we generally judge of men by their weakest side.

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* Alceste, in his irritation, is carried away into making a wretched pun on the word *chute*. A similar play upon the word *fall* seems allowable.

ORON. Do you find fault with my sonnet?

ALC. I do not say that. But to keep him from writing, I pointed out to him how in our days that thirst had spoilt many a worthy man.

ORON. Do I write badly, and do I resemble in any way . . . .

ALC. I do not say that. But, in short, I said to him, what pressing necessity is there for you to rhyme, and what the deuce urges you to put your name in print? If we can forgive the publication of a wretched book, it is only to those unfortunate men who scribble for a living. Believe me; resist the temptation, keep such effusions from public notice, and do not throw away, however you may be tempted, the name of a man of sense and a gentleman which you bear at Court, to take from the hands of a grasping printer, that of a ridiculous and wretched author. This is what I tried to make him understand.

ORON. And I think I understand you. But this is all very well. May I know what in my sonnet can . . . .

ALC. Truly, you had better shut it up in your cabinet; you have followed bad models, and your expressions are in no way natural. Pray what is: *And rock awhile our hapless mind?* and, *Nothing pleasant walks behind?* also, *And not to such expense proceed, if you could give me only hope?* or, *Fair Phyllis, men will soon despair, when doomed to hope for aye?* This figurative style that people are so vain of, falls far short of good taste and truth. It is a paltry play on words, and mere affectation. Nature never speaks thus. I hate the wretched taste of the age in these matters. Our forefathers, unpolished as they were, understood these things better: and I value less all that is now admired, than an old song which I will repeat to you:

If the king had given me
Paris town, so great and gay,
And for it I had to flee
From my lady-love away,
To King Henry I should say,
Take your Paris back, I pray;
I had liefer love my love, O
I had liefer love my love.

The versification is not rich, and the style is old. But do you not see how much better it is than all that trumpery which good sense must abhor, and that here simple nature speaks?

If the king had given me
Paris town, so great and gay,
And for it I had to flee
From my lady-love away,
To King Henry I should say,
Take your Paris back, I pray;
I had liefer love my love, O
I had liefer love my love.

This is what a heart truly in love would say. (*to* PHILINTE, *who laughs*) Yes, you may laugh as much as you please, but whatever you men of wit may say, I prefer this to the showy glitter of those false trinkets which everyone admires.

ORON. And yet I maintain that my verses are good.

ALC. You have your own reasons for thinking them so; but you will allow me to be of a different opinion, and my reasons to be independent of yours.

ORON. I think it sufficient that others prize them.

ALC. No doubt they have the gift of dissimulation which I have not.

ORON. Do you really think that you have such a large share of intelligence?

ALC. If I praised your verses, I should have more.

ORON. I can easily do without your approbation.

ALC. You must certainly, if you please, do without it.

ORON. I should like to see how you would set about composing some on the same subject.

ALC. I might have the misfortune of making some as bad as yours, but I should take great care not to show them to anyone.

ORON. You speak to me very haughtily, and this conceit . . . .

ALC. Pray find others to flatter you, and do not ask me to do so.

ORON. But, my little sir, lower somewhat your lofty tone, if you please.

ALC. I shall certainly, my big sir, do as I choose.

PHIL. (*stepping between them*). Nay, gentlemen, this is carrying the matter too far. I beg of you to cease.

ORON. Ah! I am wrong, I acknowledge it, and I leave the field to you. I am, sir, in all sincerity, your humble servant.

ALC. And I, sir, your most obedient.

SCENE III.—PHILINTE, ALCESTE.

PHIL. There! you see that, with your love of sincerity, you have drawn a troublesome affair upon yourself. It was clear to me that Oronte, in order to be flattered . . . .

ALC. Do not speak to me.

PHIL. But . . . .

ALC. No more society for me.

PHIL. It is too much . . . .

ALC. Leave me alone.

PHIL. If I . . . .

ALC. Not another word.

PHIL. But how . . . .

ALC. I will hear no more.

PHIL. But yet . . . .

ALC. Again? what, again?

PHIL. You insult . . . .

ALC. 'Sdeath! this is too much. Do not follow me.

PHIL. You are joking; I shall not leave you.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—ALCESTE, CÉLIMÈNE.

ALC. Madam, shall I be plain with you? I am far from being satisfied with your behaviour; I feel very indignant with you because of it, and I am afraid that we shall have to part. Yes, it would be deceiving you, were I to speak otherwise; sooner or later a rupture will be unavoidable, and if I promised you the contrary a thousand times, it would not be in my power to prevent it.

CELI. Oh! I see that it was in order to abuse me you wished to take me home?

ALC. I do not abuse you. But you welcome too readily the first new-comer; you allow too many lovers to beset you, and my heart sees it with pain.

CELI. Do you blame me because others love me? Can I help being thought amiable? And when people come to see me and try to be pleasant, am I to take a stick to drive them away?

ALC. No, madam, it is not a stick you want, but a heart less ready to listen to their love-tales. I know that your beauty accompanies you wherever you go; but your welcome keeps near you those your eyes have attracted; and the tender-heartedness you show to those you have conquered completes in every case the work begun by your charms. The too pleasant hope you give to your admirers increases their assiduities towards you, whereas a little reticence in your favours would soon drive the whole crowd away. At least, madam, tell me by what good fortune your Clitandre has the happiness of pleasing you so much. Upon what fund of merit and sublime virtue do you ground the honour of your esteem for him? Is it by the long nail* on his little finger that he has won your affectionate regard? Are you fascinated, along with the whole fashionable world, by the dazzling merit of his fair periwig? Is it to his large canions† he owes your love for him? His great collection of ribbons have, perhaps, the power of charming you? Is it by the attraction of his large rhingrave‡ that he has gained your heart while calling himself your slave? Perhaps it is his way of laughing, or his falsetto§ voice, which has found out the secret of touching your heart?

CELI. How unjustly you take umbrage at him. Do you not know why I humour him, and that he has promised to interest all his friends in my lawsuit?

ALC. Eh! madam, lose your lawsuit with good courage, and do not encourage a rival who is hateful to me.

CELI. But you are becoming jealous of everybody.

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* A fashion of the time. † Vol. i. p. 250, note.

‡ Large breeches tied at the knees with ribbons—a German fashion.

§ *See* 'L'Impromptu de Versailles,' vol. i. p. 405.

ALC. Because everybody is kindly received by you.

CELI. To see in me the same goodwill for all, is the very thing which should calm your fearful spirit. You would have more reason to be offended, if you saw me entirely taken up with one.

ALC. Yet I, whom you blame for too much jealousy, pray what have I more than any of them?

CELI. The happiness of knowing that you are loved.

ALC. And how can my yearning heart feel assured of it?

CELI. I should think that as I have taken the trouble to tell you so, such a confession ought to satisfy you.

ALC. But how shall I feel sure that you do not say as much to everybody else at the same time?

CELI. Truly, a pretty speech for a lover! You make me out to be a nice person! Very well; to spare you any such suspicion, I retract at once all that I have said; and the possibility of being deceived, rests now with you alone. Are you satisfied?

ALC. Alas! why do I love you so much? Oh! if ever I free my heart from this thraldom, I will bless Heaven for my rare good fortune! I do not wish to hide it from you; I do all I can to tear from my heart this terrible fondness, but my most strenuous efforts have failed hitherto. It is for my sins that I love you thus.*

CELI. It is true, your love for me is unparalleled.

ALC. Yes, I can challenge the whole world. The depth of my love no one can conceive, and never, madam, has any man loved as I do.

CELI. Quite so; your method is entirely new, for you love people only to quarrel with them; your passion breaks out only in unkind words, and never was there seen such a grumbling lover.

ALC. But it depends entirely on you for his grumbling to cease. For pity's sake, let us cut short all these discussions, and let us deal openly with one another, and see if we can put a stop to . . . .†

* It is said that Molière only recorded here what he told his friend Chapelle of his sufferings on account of his wife. *See* 'La Fameuse Comédienne,' p. 39.

† "Before Molière, love had been treated after the Spanish fashion,

SCENE II.—CÉLIMÈNE, ALCESTE, BASQUE.

CELI. What is the matter?
BAS. Acaste is downstairs.
CELI. Very well; tell him to come up.

SCENE III.—ALCESTE, CÉLIMÈNE.

ALC. What! can I never have a moment of private conversation with you? Must you always be ready to receive company, and cannot you for once make up your mind to refuse your door?

CELI. Do you wish me to quarrel with him?

ALC. I cannot approve such affable manners.

CELI. He is a man never to forgive me, if he knew that I could feel annoyed at his visits.

ALC. And what is that to you, that you should inconvenience yourself in that fashion?

CELI. Indeed! the goodwill of men like him should be considered, for somehow he is one of those people who manage to be heard at Court. They mix in all conversations, and even if they can do you no good, they can do you harm. Whatever support one may have elsewhere, it would never do to make an enemy of such loud talkers.

ALC. In short, whatever one may say or do, you still find reasons to bear with everyone; and the wisdom of your judgment . . . .

SCENE IV.—ALCESTE, CÉLIMÈNE, BASQUE.

BAS. Clitandre is here also, madam.
ALC. I expected as much. (*About to go.*)
CELI. Where are you running away to?
ALC. I am going.

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i.e. like a heroic passion which ennobled its personages. Corneille had done so in 'Le Cid,' in 'Cinna,' &c. Molière was the first who, from his sad personal experience, treated it like a human weakness. Racine, who had only produced as yet 'La Thébaïde' and 'Alexandre,' had followed Corneille. But after having seen 'Le Misanthrope,' he forsook conventional love. A year after 'Le Misanthrope' appeared 'Andromaque,' the first revelation of Racine's genius. Voltaire could truly say: 'We most likely owe Racine to Molière.'"—F. GENIN.

CELI. Stay here.
ALC. Why should I stay?
CELI. Stay.
ALC. I cannot.
CELI. I wish it.
ALC. No, no: these conversations only weary me, and you ask too much when you wish me to bear with them.
CELI. I insist upon your staying.
ALC. No, it is impossible.
CELI. Very well, go, then; do just as you please.

SCENE V.—ELIANTE, PHILINTE, ACASTE, CLITANDRE, ALCESTE, CÉLIMÈNE, BASQUE.

ELI. (*to* CÉLIMÈNE). Here are the two marquises coming up with us. Have you been told of it?
CELI. (*to* BASQUE). Chairs for everybody. (BASQUE *places chairs and exit.*) (*aside to* ALCESTE) What! you are not gone yet?
ALC. No, but I am determined to force you to choose between them and me.
CELI. Be quiet.
ALC. You will explain yourself this very day.
CELI. You are surely losing your senses.
ALC. I am doing nothing of the kind; you shall declare yourself.
CELI. Ah!
ALC. You shall decide between them and me.
CELI. You are laughing, I suppose.
ALC. No, you shall make up your mind; my forbearance is at an end.
CLIT. Egad! madam, I have just come from the Louvre, where Cléonte, at the levee, made himself supremely ridiculous. Has he no friend who could give him some charitable advice on his behaviour?
CELI. It is true that he sadly compromises his reputation; his manners everywhere at once strike us as odd; and when after a short absence we see him again, he seems even more absurd than before.
ACA. 'Gad! talking of absurd people, I have just had to bear with that most trying of tedious bores, the arguer

Damon; if you will believe me, he kept me out of my sedan-chair in the broiling sun for a whole hour.

CELI. He certainly is a strange talker, and knows how to make long speeches with no meaning in them. No one understands a word of what he says; and in all that we hear, there is nothing but noise.

ELI. (*to* PHILINTE). This is no bad beginning, and the conversation is in a fair way against our neighbours.

CLIT. Timante, madam, is another original.*

CELI. He is a man all mystery from head to foot. In passing he casts upon one a bewildered glance, and with nothing to do is always busy. Grimaces abound in whatever he says: and he wearies one to death with his ceremonies. In the midst of a general conversation he has always some secret to whisper, and that secret turns out to be nothing. He makes a wonder of the merest trifle, and even wishes you "good morning" mysteriously in your ear.

ACA. And Gérald, madam?

CELI. Oh! the tedious boaster! You never see him come down from his noble pedestal. He is always mixing in the best society, and never quotes anyone less than duke, prince, or princess. Rank has turned his head, and all his talk is of horses, carriages, and dogs. He thou's† people of the highest position, and the word "sir" is with him quite obsolete.

CLIT. It is said that he is on the best terms with Bélise.

CELI. Ah! the poor creature; and what dull company she is! I suffer martyrdom when she comes to see me. In vain do I tax my powers to the utmost, to find out what to say to her; the barrenness of her talk destroys every attempt at conversation. It is useless to have recourse to the most commonplace topics to overcome her stupid silence; the fine weather, the rain, the cold, and the heat are soon exhausted. Yet her visits, in themselves so unwelcome, drag their weary length along, and you may consult the clock and yawn twenty times, but she stirs no more than a log of wood.

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* The Comte de Saint-Gilles, according to commentators.

† Compare vol. i. p. 286.

ACA. And what do you think of Adraste?

CELI. Ah! what intolerable pride! He is a man puffed up with self-conceit, always dissatisfied with the Court, and who makes it his business daily to inveigh against it. There is neither office, place, nor living given away, without some injustice having been done to the important personage he fancies himself to be.

CLIT. But young Cléon, who is visited by the best society, what do you say of him?

CELI. That his cook has all the merit, and that it is to his table that each one pays respect.

ELI. He takes care to provide the most dainty dishes.

CELI. Yes, but I wish he would not provide himself; and I consider his stupid person a most unpleasant dish, which, to my mind, spoils the taste of all the others.

PHIL. His uncle, Damis, is greatly esteemed; what do you say of him, madam?

CELI. He is one of my friends.

PHIL. He is a gentleman, and has plenty of good sense.

CELI. Yes; only the display of cleverness he makes, vexes me beyond measure. He is always stiff and formal, and in all he says you can feel the effort he is making to utter some witticism. Since he has taken it into his head to think himself clever, he is so exacting that nothing can please his taste. He tries to see defects in all that is written; thinks that to bestow praise is not worthy of a man of intelligence; that it is a sign of knowledge to find fault with everything, the part of fools to admire and to laugh; and that in never approving the writings of our time he shows his superiority to other people. He even finds fault with ordinary conversations, and will not condescend to utter common things; but, his arms crossed on his breast, looks down with contempt from the height of his intellect on all that is said.

ACA. Demmit, madam, his very picture!

CLIT. Your skill in drawing character is admirable, madam.

ALC. Go on, go on, my dear courtly friends; no one is spared, and each will have his turn; yet, let any one of

those people now appear, and we shall see you rush in haste to meet him, offer him your hand, and, with a flattering embrace, protest you are his sincere friend.

CLIT. Why do you call us to account? If you object to what is said, you had better address your reproaches to this lady.

ALC. No, upon my soul, no! It is you who deserve the blame; your fawning smiles draw from her these slanderous descriptions; her satirical turn of mind is constantly encouraged by the criminal incense of your flattery. She would find raillery less to her taste if she knew that it is not approved of. Thus it is that flatterers are always responsible for the vices spread among mankind.

PHIL. But why show such deep interest for those people? You would be the first to condemn in them the defects we find fault with.

CELI. But must not our friend always show opposition? You surely would not have him think like everybody else, and must he not display everywhere the spirit of contradiction with which Heaven has blessed him? What others think never satisfies him; he is always of the opposite opinion, and he would fear to pass for a vulgar-minded man if he were observed to agree with anyone. The privilege of contradicting has such charms for him, that he is often in arms against himself; and to hear his own thoughts expressed by others, is sufficient to make him oppose them.

ALC. The laughers are on your side, madam; that is everything, and you may freely indulge in your satirical mood against me.

PHIL. But you know also that you always fire up against anything that is said, and that through your avowed irritability of disposition you cannot bear to hear people either praised or blamed.

ALC. 'Sdeath! It is because men are never in the right, and that anger against them is always reasonable; for in everything they prove themselves to be either unblushing flatterers or rash censors.

CELI. But . . . .

ALC. No, madam, no; though I were to die for it, I must speak out. You have amusements which I cannot

tolerate, and it is wrong of everyone here to encourage in you the great tendency you have to the defects which I blame.

CLIT. As for myself, I do not know, but I openly declare that hitherto I have believed this lady to be faultless.

ACA. I see her endowed with beauty and attractions; but if she has any defects, I fail to see them.

ALC. I see them all, and, far from affecting to be blind to her faults, she will tell you that I take great care to reproach her with them. The more devotedly we love, the less we ought to flatter. True love shows itself in not passing over anything; and, for my part, I would banish from my presence all those mean-spirited lovers so submissive to what I say or think, and whose tame obsequiousness panders to all my vagaries.

CELI. In a word, according to you, when we are truly in love we ought to banish all tenderness, and to believe that the highest aim of perfect sympathy is to upbraid sharply those with whom we sympathise.

ELI. This is not generally the way of love, and lovers ever extol the object of their choice. They can see nothing to blame, and everything becomes charming. They think faults perfections, and invent endearing terms by which to call them. She who is pale vies in fairness with the jessamine; the negress is an adorable brunette; a grace the lean and spare; she who is stout, has a bearing full of majesty; the slattern, with but few charms, passes for a careless beauty; the giantess becomes a goddess, and the dwarf an epitome of Heaven's wonders; the haughty beauty has a soul worthy of a diadem; deceitfulness passes for wit, and stupidity for good nature; the over-talkative is of a cheerful disposition, and she who is mute has retiring ways. Thus it is that a passionate lover cherishes even the defects of her he adores.

ALC. And I maintain . . . .

CELI. Let us drop the subject, and go and take a turn or two in the gallery. What! are you going, gentlemen?

CLIT., ACA. (*together*). No, madam.

ALC. The fear of losing them greatly troubles you. Go when you please, gentlemen; but I warn you that I shall only leave after you are gone.

ACA. Unless my presence should prove importunate, nothing calls me elsewhere to-day.

CLIT. As for me, provided I am in time for the *petit coucher*,* I have no other engagement to call me away.

CELI. (*to* ALCESTE). Surely this is only a joke.

ALC. Not so. We shall see if it is me you wish to send away.

SCENE VI.—ALCESTE, CÉLIMÈNE, ELIANTE, ACASTE, PHILINTE, CLITANDRE, BASQUE.

BAS. (*to* ALCESTE). Sir, there is a man downstairs who wants to speak to you on business which cannot be put off.

ALC. Tell him that I have no such urgent business.

BAS. He has a jacket on with large plaited skirts, all embroidered with gold.

CELI. (*to* ALCESTE). Go and see who it is, or else make him come in.

SCENE VII.—ALCESTE, CÉLIMÈNE, ELIANTE, ACASTE, PHILINTE, CLITANDRE, A GUARD OF THE MARÉCHAUSSÉE.

ALC. (*going to meet the* GUARD). Well, what is it you want of me? Come in, sir.

GUARD. I want to speak a word or two privately with you.

ALC. You can speak out loud, and tell me what it is that brings you here.

GUARD. The Marshals of France,† with whose commands I am charged, hereby summon you to appear immediately before them, sir.

ALC. Whom do you say? Me?

GUARD. Yourself.

ALC. And what for?

PHIL. (*to* ALCESTE). It is this ridiculous affair of yours with Oronte.

CELI. (*to* PHILINTE). What is it all about?

PHIL. Oronte and he got angry to-day with one another

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* Vol. i. p. 162, note.

† See note at the beginning of 'Misanthrope.'

about some trifling verses he would not approve of, and the Marshals no doubt want to hush up the matter at once.

ALC. I shall show no servile compliance.

PHIL. However, you must obey the summons; come, get ready.

ALC. What possible understanding can we come to? Will the decree of these gentlemen oblige me to speak highly of the verses which are the cause of our quarrel? I cannot retract what I have said; I think them bad.

PHIL. But with a more conciliatory tone . . . .

ALC. I shall not yield; the verses are execrable.

PHIL. Try to show yourself a little more tractable. Come on.

ALC. Unless an express command comes from the king for me to approve of the verses about which so much ado is made, by gad! I shall maintain that they are detestable, and that a man deserves to be hanged for having made them. (*to* CLITANDRE *and* ACASTE, *who laugh*) 'Sdeath! gentlemen, I did not think I was so amusing.

CELI. Go quickly where you are wanted.

ALC. I am going, madam, but I shall soon be back here to finish our discussion.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—CLITANDRE, ACASTE.*

CLIT. My dear marquis, I see you beaming with satisfaction: you are amused at everything, and nothing seems to alarm you. Now, do you really and truly believe, without flattering yourself, that you have good reason to appear so joyful?

ACA. By Jove! I do not see, when looking at myself, that I have any reason to be sad. I am rich and young; I come of a family which can call itself noble with some appearance of truth; and I think that, thanks to the rank I hold from my ancestors, there are few positions for which

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* Most likely intended for the Duke de Lauzun.

I am not fit. As for courage, which we ought to value above all things, it is well known, without boasting on my part, that I am not wanting in that, and people have seen me carry on a certain affair of honour with vigour and determination enough. As for wit, I undoubtedly possess some. I have also good natural taste, which enables me to judge and reason upon everything without study; to play the knowing critic upon the stage, when, to my delight, any new piece comes out; to give my opinion as a judge, and to set the whole house going at all the passages which deserve applause. I have tact, perfect manners, good looks, particularly fine teeth, and a very elegant figure. As to dress, few, I believe, would dispute the palm with me. I am esteemed as much as one can be; greatly beloved by the fair sex, and in favour with the king. Now, I do think that with all these advantages, my dear marquis, I do verily think that a man may well rest satisfied with himself in whatever country he may be.

CLIT. Very true. But how is it that, finding conquests so easy elsewhere, you come here to utter fruitless sighs?

ACA. I utter fruitless sighs! Egad! I am neither of the mould nor disposition to endure the indifference of any woman. It is good for awkward and ordinary men to languish at the feet of inexorable beauties, and to bear with their indifference; to invoke the help of sighs and tears, and endeavour to obtain by much long-suffering what is refused to their scanty worth. But men of my stamp, marquis, are not made to love upon trust and to bear all the trouble. However great may be the merit of the fair sex, I fancy, thank Heaven! that we are worth our price; that to take pride in the possession of a heart like mine, it should of necessity cost them something; and that it is but just and proper that all advances should be mutual.

CLIT. You believe, then, marquis, that your position here leaves nothing to be desired?

ACA. I have reason, marquis, to believe it to be so.

CLIT. Trust me, marquis, bid farewell to such delusion. You flatter yourself, my dear friend, and blindly deceive yourself.

ACA. Quite right; I flatter and deceive myself.

CLIT. But what can make you believe in such absolute success?

ACA. I flatter myself.

CLIT. Upon what do you ground your belief?

ACA. I blindly deceive myself.

CLIT. Have you any certain proofs?

ACA. I am altogether mistaken, I tell you.

CLIT. Has Célimène made you any secret avowal of her preference for you?

ACA. No; I am very ill-used by her.

CLIT. Answer me, I pray.

ACA. I meet with nothing but repulses.

CLIT. Leave off your raillery. Tell me what hope she has given you.

ACA. I am the rejected lover, and you the fortunate one. She bears to my whole person the strongest aversion, and there is no doubt but that one of these days I shall have to hang myself.

CLIT. Look here, marquis; will you be straightforward in this our love affair, and agree to one thing:—that if one of us two can show satisfactory proof that he has the larger share in Célimène's affections, the other will give up the field to the probable conqueror, and thereby rid him of an obstinate rival?

ACA. Egad! your proposal pleases me, and I agree to it with all my heart. But, hush!

SCENE II.—CÉLIMÈNE, ACASTE, CLITANDRE.

CELI. What! still here?

CLIT. Love detains us, madam.

CELI. I just heard a carriage coming; do you know who it is?

CLIT. No.

SCENE III.—CÉLIMÈNE, ACASTE, CLITANDRE, BASQUE.

BAS. Arsinoë, madam, is coming up to see you.

CELI. What can the woman want with me?

BAS. Eliante is there also, talking with her.

CELI. What has she taken into her head? What can possibly bring her here?

ACA. She is known for a perfect prude wherever she goes, and the ardour of her zeal . . . .

CELI. Yes, yes, all pure affectation. In her inmost soul she is as worldly as any of us, and all her anxiety is to hook somebody—not that she has any chance of success. She looks with envy at the lovers of others, and, seeing herself forsaken by all, she ever raves against the blindness of the age. She tries to hide behind the sham veil of the prude the frightful isolation of her heart, and, to save the credit of her feeble charms, she condemns as criminal the power they do not possess. Yet a lover would greatly please the lady, and she has a certain weakness for Alceste. The addresses he pays me are an insult to her attractions, a robbery of which she is the victim; and her jealous vexation, which she can scarcely hide, vents itself anywhere and at any time by some underhand fling at me. Indeed, I never saw anything more stupid; she is rude to the last degree, and . . . .

SCENE IV.—ARSINOË, CÉLIMÈNE, CLITANDRE, ACASTE.

CELI. Ah, madam! what happy chance brings you here? I was getting sincerely anxious about you.

ARS. I have come, prompted by duty, to give you some advice.

CELI. Ah, how pleased I am to see you!

(*Exeunt* CLITANDRE *and* ACASTE, *laughing.*)

SCENE V.—ARSINOË, CÉLIMÈNE.

ARS. Their departure could not be more opportune.

CELI. Shall we sit down?

ARS. No, it is not necessary. Friendship, madam, ought especially to show itself in those things which we consider of the greatest consequence to us; and as there are none of more importance than honour and reputation, I come to prove my friendship to you by giving you a piece of advice which closely concerns your honour. I was yesterday visiting some virtuous and upright friends

of mine, when the conversation turned, madam, upon you. I am sorry to say that your conduct, and the scandal it causes, was far from being approved of. That crowd of people whose visits you encourage; your gallantry, and the rumours to which it gives rise, found censors more numerous than should be, and more severe than I could have wished. You can easily imagine which part I took. I did all in my power to defend you. I vindicated your conduct on the plea of your good intentions, and made myself answerable for the honesty of your heart. But you know that there are in life certain things that we cannot excuse, however desirous we may be of doing so; and I was forced at last to acknowledge that the way in which you live does you harm; that it assumes a very suspicious look in the eyes of the world, and gives occasion to many an ill-natured story to be spread about; although you have but to wish it, for your conduct to give less hold to uncharitable tongues. Not that I could think for one moment that virtue has been outraged. Heaven preserve me from such a thought! But people too easily trust the appearances of guilt, and it is not sufficient for us to lead a blameless life if we neglect these appearances. I feel sure, madam, that you are too sensible not to take in good part this kindly-meant advice, and not to attribute it merely to the earnestness of an affection which makes me anxious for your welfare.

CELI. Madam, I have many thanks to return to you, and such advice lays me under great obligation. Far from taking it unkindly, I am only too anxious at once to prove my gratitude by giving you on my part a certain piece of advice, which, wonderful to say, closely concerns your honour; and as I see you prove yourself my friend by informing me of the reports that people spread about me, I wish, in my turn, to follow so pleasing an example by acquainting you with what is said of you. In a certain house, where I was visiting the other day, I met with people of the most striking merit; and they, speaking of the duties of a person who leads a virtuous life, turned the conversation, madam, upon you. There, your prudishness and the vehemence of your zeal were by no means quoted as a good example. That affectation of a grave demeanour;

your everlasting speeches on discretion and honour; your simpering, and your outcries at the shadow of any impropriety which an innocent though ambiguous word may present; the high esteem in which you hold yourself, and the looks of pity you cast upon others; your frequent lectures and your sharp censures on things which are harmless and pure; all this, madam, if I may speak the plain truth, was blamed by common accord. "What signify," said they, "that modest mien and that grave manner, which are belied by all the rest? She is most exact at all her prayers, but she beats her servants and pays them no wages. She makes the greatest display of fervour in all places of worship, but she paints and wishes to appear beautiful. She has all nudities covered in her pictures, but she delights in the reality." For my part, I undertook your defence against every one, and assured them it was all calumny; but the general opinion went against me, and the conclusion was that you would do well to be less solicitous about other people's actions and take more pains about your own; that we should examine ourselves a great deal before thinking of condemning others; that we ought to add the weight of an exemplary life to the corrections we pretend to make in our neighbours; and that, after all, it would be better still to leave that care to those who were ordained by Heaven for it. Madam, I believe that you also are too sensible not to take in good part this kindly-meant advice, and not to attribute it to the earnestness of an affection which makes me anxious for your welfare.

ARS. Whatever we may be exposed to when we admonish another, I was not prepared, madam, for such a retort as this; and I can see, by the bitterness of your speech, that my sincere advice has hurt your feelings.

CELI. On the contrary, madam, if the world were wise, it would bring these mutual counsels into fashion. Sincerity in such a course of action would help to destroy that over-estimation of our own merit which we all have. It depends entirely on you, madam, for us two to continue this kindly office with equal zeal on both sides, and to take great care to repeat what we hear: you of me, I of you.

ARS. Ah! madam, I can hear nothing to your disadvantage; it is only in me that there is so much to reprove.

CELI. Madam, my belief is that we may praise or blame everything; and that everything is right according to age and taste. There is a time for gallantry, and a time for prudery. We may adopt the latter out of policy, when the glorious freshness of our youth has left us; it covers much vexatious neglect. I am not at all sure but that I shall follow your example some day. Age will bring about many changes; but it is not the time, madam, as you will acknowledge, to play the prude at twenty.

ARS. You boast of a very trifling advantage, madam, and you proclaim your age very loudly. The difference there may be between yours and mine is not so very great for you to make so much of it, and I do not know why you give way to so passionate an outburst and abuse me so unmercifully.

CELI. Neither do I know, madam, why you should everywhere show yourself so bitter against me. Why should you lay at my door all the vexations you may have? Am I responsible for the advances that are not made to you? If my presence inspires men with love, and if they persist in offering me every day attentions which your heart may desire for yourself, I have no power to prevent it, and it is really no fault of mine. You are perfectly at liberty, and I do not forbid you to have charms to attract them.

ARS. Alas! and do you really think that I trouble myself much about the number of lovers you are so vain of; and that it is not very easy to judge what is the price paid nowadays to attract them? Do you wish to make people believe, with what we see going on, that your merit attracts all that crowd? that they are all inspired with a pure, honest love for you? and that it is to your virtues alone they pay their court? The world is no dupe, and is not blinded by idle pretences. It sees some women who are made to inspire love, and who, nevertheless, retain no lovers about their persons; and it can draw its own inference. No! we do not make such conquests without great advances; none are satisfied with

the beauty of our looks only, and we must dearly buy all the attentions paid to us. Do not pride yourself so much, therefore, upon the shallow advantage of a miserable victory, and think with less haughtiness of your own charms, instead of looking down upon others because of them. If we were envious of the conquests you make, I think we might do as much, be under no restraint, and show you easily that we have lovers whenever we wish for them.

CELI. Have some by all means, madam, and let us see your success; endeavour by this excellent expedient to please, and without . . . .

ARS. Let us cease, madam, such a conversation; it would lead us too far. I should have left you before now had I not been forced to wait for my carriage.

CELI. Pray, wait as long as you please, madam, there is no need for you to hurry away. But I will relieve you of my presence and give you more pleasant company. This gentleman, whom chance sends us so opportunely, will know better than I, how to entertain you.

SCENE VI.—ALCESTE, CÉLIMÈNE, ARSINOË.

CELI. Alceste, I am obliged to go and write a letter or two which cannot be put off. Pray stop with this lady; I feel sure she will kindly excuse my incivility.

SCENE VII.—ALCESTE, ARSINOË.

ARS. You see that according to her wish I am to entertain you till my carriage comes; and never could she have offered to me anything more pleasant than such a conversation. Yes, indeed, persons eminently endowed with merit command the love and esteem of everybody; and no doubt yours has some secret spell which attracts my heart and makes me feel for you the greatest interest. I wish that the Court would render justice to your worth. You have a right to complain, and I am carried beyond myself when I see, as each day passes, that nothing is done for you.

ALC. For me, madam? and on what grounds could I

lay claim to anything? What services have I rendered to the State? Tell me what I have done, so worthy of praise, for me to complain that the Court does nothing for me?

ARS. It is not everyone on whom it bestows its favour, who has rendered these signal services; opportunity as well as power is necessary, and in short the talents everyone sees in you should . . . .

ALC. No more about my talents, I beg of you! What would you have the Court encumber itself with? Its task would be no easy one, and its troubles would become strangely great, if it were to try and bring to light the merit of everyone.

ARS. Transcendent merit will bring itself to light; yours is greatly valued in certain circles, and you ought to know that twice yesterday in my hearing you were much praised by people of high standing.

ALC. Ha! madam, everybody is praised nowadays, and our age treats all alike. Every man has great merit thrust upon him. No, really, it is no longer an honour to be admired. We are crushed with praises; people throw them in our very face, and even my servant is put in the gazette.

ARS. For my part, I wish that I could persuade you to look after some place at Court which would set off your worth before all men. Were you to give me the least sign, a great many influences could be set in motion to serve you, and I would soon find people ready to make the road easy for you.

ALC. And what would you have me do at Court, madam? I am by disposition forced to avoid it. Heaven, in sending me into this world, did not give me a soul that could breathe in the atmosphere of such a spot. I do not feel in me the necessary qualities to make my fortune there. To tell the truth and be sincere are my chief talents. When speaking I cannot humour people in order to deceive them, and whoever has not the gift of hiding his thoughts ought to make but a short stay in such places. If we do not belong to the Court, it is true that we lose the position and honourable titles which in our days it bestows; but at the same time, as a compensation

for the loss of these advantages, we are not exposed to the grief of playing the part of silly personages. We have not to put up with many a cruel rebuff; to praise the verses of Mr. So-and-so; to flatter Lady Such-a-one; nor to bear with the follies of our hare-brained marquises.

ARS. Let us leave this subject aside, since you will have it so, but I must say that my heart cannot help pitying you in your love, and, to tell you the truth, I sincerely wish that your affections could be better placed. You certainly deserve a better fate, for she whom you love is unworthy of you.

ALC. But pray, madam, do you remember while you speak, that this person is your friend?

ARS. Yes, I do; but my conscience has suffered too long from the wrong that is done to you. The position you are in is too painful for me to bear, and I cannot help telling you that your love is shamefully betrayed.

ALC. You certainly show a great concern for me, madam, and such information is very precious to a lover.

ARS. Yes, indeed, although my friend, she is, I grieve to say, unworthy of the love of a man of honour like you; for all the affection she shows is mere deceit.

ALC. It may be so, madam: one cannot read people's hearts; but your charity might have dispensed with raising such suspicions in mine.

ARS. If you do not wish to be undeceived, it is easy enough to say no more to you.

ALC. Not so, madam. But on such a subject nothing is more unbearable than doubt, and I should prefer a plain statement which could be clearly proved.

ARS. Very well, it is enough, and you shall be fully enlightened on the subject. Yes, you shall believe the testimony of your own eyes only. Pray accompany me to my house; there I will give you a palpable proof of the faithlessness of her you love; and if after that you can still think of another, perhaps we can offer you some consolation.

ACT IV.

Scene I.—Eliante, Philinte.

Phil. No, never was there a more unbending disposition, nor a reconciliation more difficult to bring about. In vain were all means tried to make Alceste alter his mind, nothing could make him change his first opinion, and never had so whimsical a quarrel, I believe, called forth all the discretion of those gentlemen.—"No, gentlemen," said he, "I cannot retract what I have said, and I am ready to agree to anything except to this. What is he so exasperated about, and what can he want of me? Is his glory at stake because he cannot write well? What need has he of my opinion which he has taken amiss? He may be a perfect gentleman, and yet write bad verses. Honour is in no way concerned in such matters; I think him an honourable man in every way; a man of noble birth, of merit and of courage, anything you please—but a very bad author notwithstanding. I will praise, if you wish me, his mode of living, his munificence, his skill in riding, fencing, and dancing; but as to praising his verses—I am his humble servant, and I repeat that when we cannot write better, we should avoid writing altogether, unless, indeed, we are condemned to it under pain of death." In short, the only conciliatory measure to which he at last yielded with extreme difficulty, was to say, greatly softening his tone as he thought, "Sir, I am sorry to be so difficult to please; and out of regard for you, I wish with all my heart that I had been able to think your sonnet better." Thereupon they quickly made them end the whole proceeding with an embrace.

Eli. He certainly behaves very strangely at times, but I own that I hold him in great esteem, and the sincerity he glories in has in it something noble and heroic. It is a rare virtue in our days, and I could wish to see everybody possess it as he does.

Phil. As for me, the more I know him the more astonished I am at the passion to which he is a slave. With such a disposition, I cannot understand that he should ever

have taken into his head to love, and still less how your cousin should be the person of his choice.

ELI. It shows that it is not always conformity of disposition which brings people together, and all those stories of love springing out of sympathy are belied by this example.

PHIL. But do you think, from what we can see, that he is loved in return here?

ELI. This is a question not easily solved. How can one judge whether she really loves him? She hardly understands her own heart herself. At times she loves without being aware of it, and at others she believes she loves when really she feels nothing of the kind.

PHIL. I fear that our friend will meet with more sorrow than he imagines from this cousin of yours; and if he were of my mind he would place his affection elsewhere, and in making a better choice, answer to the kind feelings your heart shows for him.

ELI. It is true; I do not try to disguise it, and I think that in these things we ought to be sincere. I see his love for another, but I do not try to oppose it; on the contrary, I feel a great interest in it for his sake; and did it depend entirely on me, I would unite him to the object of his love. But if something goes wrong, as it well may; if his love is to be thwarted by another lover, I can bring myself to accept Alceste's addresses, and shall feel no repugnance whatever to them because they have been discarded elsewhere.

PHIL. And I, madam, I also see your kind intentions towards him without wishing to oppose them; he could even tell you, if he wished, what advice I gave him on the subject. But if by a marriage which would unite them, you were prevented from receiving his attentions, all mine would tend to gain the favours you would so kindly bestow upon him—too happy if, when your heart has ceased to think of him, you can transfer your regard to me.

ELI. You are laughing, Philinte?

PHIL. No, madam, I speak to you from my inmost heart. I keep watch for the time when I shall be able to make you an offer without reserve, and I eagerly look forward to that moment.

Scene II.—Alceste, Philinte, Eliante.

Alc. Ah, madam! avenge me for an offence which has triumphed over all my constancy.

Eli. What is it? What can disturb you so much?

Alc. I cannot think of it, it is death to me, and the overthrow of all creation would not crush me like this terrible blow. It is all over with me . . . . my love . . . I cannot speak.

Eli. Try to calm yourself a little; tell me . . . .

Alc. Ah, just Heaven! can the odious vices of the basest of minds be joined to such beauty?

Eli. But pray, what can . . . .

Alc. Ah! all is over, I am . . . . I am betrayed . . . . I feel crushed; Célimène—would you believe it?—Célimène is faithless; Célimène has deceived me!

Eli. Have you any just grounds for believing it?

Phil. Perhaps you are too hasty in your suspicions, and your jealous temper sometimes gives rise to strange fancies . . . .

Alc. Ah! 'sdeath, sir! mind your own business. (*to* Eliante) It is proof enough of her perfidy to have here in my possession a letter in her own handwriting; a letter to Oronte, which has put before my eyes in a moment my disgrace and her shame—Oronte, whose attentions I thought she avoided, and of all my rivals I feared the least.

Phil. A letter may sometimes deceive, and not be so guilty as we may at first judge from appearances.

Alc. Once more, sir, leave me alone, pray, and trouble yourself about your own affairs.

Eli. You must moderate your sorrow, and the insult . . . .

Alc. Let this be your share, madam. To you I have now recourse; it is you alone who can comfort me in this my cruel sorrow. Avenge me on an ungrateful and deceitful relative, who basely betrays such constant love; avenge me for this injury, which must seem hateful to you.

Eli. I avenge you! But how?

Alc. By accepting my love. Take possession of my heart; it is only thus that I can revenge myself upon her.

I shall punish her by making her a witness of my sincere attachment, of my profound love, of the respectful cares, earnest devotion, and constant attentions which my heart will henceforth offer to none but you.

ELI. I sympathise deeply with you in your suffering, and I do not despise the love you offer me; still, the wrong may not be so great as you imagine, and you may wish to recall this desire for revenge. When the injury proceeds from one whom we really love, we indulge at first in many schemes which are soon forgotten. In vain do we see powerful reasons to break off the engagement; a guilty charmer is soon thought innocent, and all the harm we wished her, easily vanishes. Everyone knows what is the anger of a lover.

ALC. No, no, madam, no! the offence is too great; I cannot relent, and I must part from her. Nothing could now change the resolution I have taken, and I should think myself base if ever I were to love her again. But she comes. My indignation increases at her approach. I will taunt her with her perversity, confound her with my words, and after that bring to you a heart free from her deceitful charms.

SCENE III.—CÉLIMÈNE, ALCESTE.

ALC. O Heaven! may I control my just anger!

CELI. (*aside*). Ah! (*to* ALCESTE) What is this new trouble I see you in? what mean those deep sighs and those dark looks you cast upon me?

ALC. * That all the wickedness a soul is capable of can in nothing be compared to your perfidy; that fate, devils, and incensed Heaven never produced anything so worthless as yourself.

CELI. These are pretty speeches, which I certainly admire.

ALC. Ah! no more jesting; this is not a time for laughter. Rather let the blush of shame cover your face; you have cause, for your treachery is known. So the pre-

* These words from "That all" to "yourself," and also Alceste's speech from "let the blush" to "anger has conquered me," are the same as in 'Dom Garcie de Navarre,' Act IV. sc. viii.

sentiments of my heart were true; its alarms were but too well founded, and those frequent suspicions which were thought odious were true guides to what my eyes have now seen. Yes, in spite of all your skill in dissimulation, Heaven hinted to me what I had to fear. But do not think that I shall bear this insult unavenged. I know that it is not in our power to govern our inclinations; that love is always spontaneous; that we cannot enter a heart by force, and that every heart is free to name its conqueror. I would not complain, therefore, if you had from the first spoken to me without dissembling; for, although you would have crushed within me the very springs of my life, I should have blamed my fate alone for it. But to think that my love was encouraged by you! It is such a treacherous, such a perfidious action, that no punishment seems too great for it. After such an outrage, fear everything from me; I am no longer master of myself; anger has conquered me. Pierced to the heart by the cruel blow with which you kill me, my senses are not overswayed by reason; I yield myself up to a just revenge, and I cannot answer for what I may do.

CELI. *What can have called forth such an insult? Have you lost all sense and judgment? Pray speak!

ALC. Yes, when on seeing you I drank in the poison which is killing me; yes, when like a fool I thought I had found some sincerity in those treacherous charms that have deceived me.

CELI. Of what treachery are you complaining?

ALC. Ah! false heart, how well you feign ignorance! But I will leave you no loophole of escape! Look at your own handwriting; this letter is sufficient to confound you; against such evidence you can have nothing to answer.

CELI. So this is the cause of your strange outburst.

ALC. And you do not blush at the sight?

CELI. There is no occasion for me to blush.

ALC. What! will you add audacity to your deceit? Will you disown this letter because it is not signed?*

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* The words from "What can have called forth" to "not signed," are, with slight alterations, in 'Dom Garcie de Navarre,' Act II. sc. v. (See vol. i. p. 206.)

CELI. Why should I disown it, when it is mine?

ALC. And you can look at it without being ashamed of the crime of which it shows you to be guilty towards me?

CELI. You are, in truth, a most foolish man.

ALC. What! you face thus calmly this all-convincing proof? And the tenderness you show in it for Oronte, has it nothing that can outrage me or shame you?

CELI. Oronte! who told you that this letter is for him?

ALC. Those who, to-day, put it in my hands. But suppose I grant that it is for another, have I less cause to complain? and would you be, in fact, less guilty towards me?

CELI. But if the letter was written to a woman, in what can it hurt you, and what guilt is there in it?

ALC. Ah! the evasion is excellent, and the excuse admirable! I must acknowledge that I did not expect such deceit, and I am now altogether convinced. What! do you dare to have recourse to such base tricks? Do you think people entirely devoid of understanding? Show me a little in what way you can maintain such a palpable falsehood, and how you can apply to a woman all the words which in this letter convey so much tenderness. In order to cover your infidelity, reconcile if you can what I am going to read to . . . .

CELI. No, I will not. What right have you to assume such authority, and to dare to tell me such things to my face?

ALC. No, no, instead of giving way to anger, try to explain to me the expressions you use here.

CELI. I shall do nothing of the kind, and what you think on the subject matters very little to me.

ALC. For pity's sake, show me, and I shall be satisfied, that this letter can be explained to be meant for a woman.

CELI. It is for Oronte; there! and I will have you believe it. I receive all his attentions gladly. I admire what he says; I like his person, and I admit whatever you please. Do as you like, take your own course, let nothing stop you, and annoy me no more.

ALC. (*aside*). O heavens! can anything more cruel be invented; and was ever a heart treated in such a manner? What! I am justly incensed against her, I

come to complain, and I must bear the blame! She excites my grief and my suspicion to the utmost. She wishes me to believe everything, she boasts of everything; and yet my heart is cowardly enough not to break the bonds that bind it, cowardly enough not to arm itself with deserved contempt for the cruel one it, alas! loves too much. (*to* CÉLIMÈNE) * Ah! faithless woman, you well know how to take advantage of my weakness, and to make the deep yearning love I have for you serve your own ends. Clear yourself at least of a crime which overwhelms me with grief, and cease to affect to be guilty towards me. Show me, if you can, that this letter is innocent; strive to appear faithful to me, and I will strive to believe you.

CELI. Believe me, you forget yourself in your jealous fits, and you do not deserve all the love I feel for you. I should like to know what could compel me to condescend to the baseness of dissembling with you; and why, if my heart were engaged to another, I should not frankly tell you so. What! does not the kind assurance of my feelings towards you, plead my defence against all your suspicions? Have they any weight before such a pledge? Do you not insult me when you give way to them? And †since it requires so great an effort for us to speak our love; since the honour of our sex, that enemy to love, so strictly forbids such a confession, should the lover who sees us for his sake conquer such obstacles, think lightly of that testimony, and go unpunished? Is he not to blame if he does not trust what we have confessed with so much reluctance? Indeed, my indignation should be the reward of such doubts, and you do not deserve that I should care for you. I am very foolish, and am vexed at my own folly for still retaining any good-will towards you. I ought to place my affections elsewhere, and thus give you just excuse for complaint.

ALC. Ah, faithless woman! How wonderful is my weakness for you! You deceive me, no doubt, with such

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* The words from "faithless woman" to "your own ends," and from "since it requires" to "so much reluctance," are found in 'Dom Garcie de Navarre,' Act IV. sc. viii., Act III. sc. i.

† See last note.

endearing words. But let it be; I must submit to my destiny; I give myself heart and soul to you. I trust you. I will to the end see what your heart will prove to be, and if it can be cruel enough to deceive me.

CELI. No; you do not love me as you ought to love.

ALC. Ah! nothing can be compared with my exceeding great love; and in my anxiety to make the whole world a witness to it, I even go so far as to form wishes against you. Yes, I could wish that no one thought you charming; that you were reduced to a humbler lot; that Heaven, at your birth, had bestowed nothing upon you; that you had neither rank, high birth, nor wealth, *so that my heart in offering itself, might make up for the injustice of such a fate, and that I might have both the happiness and the glory on that day of seeing you owe everything to my love.

CELI. This is wishing me well after a strange sort. May Heaven spare me from your ever having an opportunity .... But here comes Mr. Dubois in strange attire.

SCENE IV.—CÉLIMÈNE, ALCESTE, DUBOIS.

ALC. What means this costume, and your frightened look? What is the matter with you?

DU. Sir ....

ALC. Well?

DU. We have seen strange things to-day.

ALC. What do you mean?

DU. Our affairs, sir, are in a bad way.

ALC. What?

DU. Shall I speak out?

ALC. Yes; and quickly.

DU. Is there nobody there?

ALC. Ah! What trifling! Will you speak?

DU. Sir, we must march off.

ALC. What do you say?

DU. We must decamp without beat of drum.

ALC. But why?

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* The words from "so that" to "love" are with some alterations also found in 'Dom Garcie de Navarre,' Act I. sc. iii.

DU. I tell you that we must leave this place.

ALC. The reason?

DU. We must go, sir; without taking leave.

ALC. But what is the meaning of all this rubbish?

DU. The meaning is, sir, that we must pack and be off.

ALC. Ah! I shall certainly break your head for you, rascal, if you are not quick in explaining yourself.

DU. Sir, a man with black coat and looks came right into the kitchen to leave with us a paper all scribbled over in such a fashion, that one need be more cunning than a demon to make it out. It is about your lawsuit, I feel sure; but even Beelzebub could not make out a word of it.

ALC. Well! and what has the paper to do with the going away you come here to speak of, you rascal?

DU. I must tell you, sir, that about an hour afterwards, a gentleman who often comes to see you, came to ask for you all in a kind of tremor, and not finding you at home, he told me softly,—for he knows that I am a very faithful servant to you, sir,—to let you know . . . . Wait a moment; what can possibly be his name?

ALC. Never mind his name, you stupid fellow, and tell me what he said.

DU. In short, he is one of your friends, and that is sufficient. He told me that you must go away from here for your very life, and that you are threatened with being arrested.

ALC. What! Did he not tell you anything more definite?

DU. No. He asked me for some paper and ink, and wrote a line or two which may let you into the depths of this mystery.

ALC. Give it me, then.

CELI. What can all this mean?

ALC. I really don't know; but I should like to have it explained to me. (*to* DUBOIS) Will you soon have done, you scoundrel?

DU. (*after having fumbled about for the note*). Faith, sir, I must have left it on your table.

ALC. I do not know what keeps me from . . . .

CELI. Do not get angry; but go and try to unravel all this.

ALC. It seems that whatever I may do, fate has sworn to prevent me from having any conversation with you. But to triumph over it, allow me in my ardent love to see you once more before the day is ended.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—ALCESTE, PHILINTE.

ALC. It is of no use; my resolution is taken.

PHIL. But, however terrible this blow may be to you, must it force you to . . . .

ALC. No, you labour in vain, and in vain try to argue. Nothing can now deter me from my project; too much perversity reigns in our age, and I am resolved to avoid in future all intercourse with men. What! everyone sees that honour, probity, decency, and the laws are all against my adversary, men publish the justice of my cause, and my mind trusts to the certainty of my right! Yet in the end I am defeated! I have justice on my side, and I lose my cause! A miserable scoundrel, whose shameful history everyone knows, comes off triumphantly, thanks to the blackest falsehood! All good faith yields to his perfidy! He cuts my throat and proves that he is right. The weight of his mean, hypocritical grimace is thrown into the balance, and justice kicks the beam. He gets a decree of court to crown his infamy; and not satisfied with the injury done to me, as there circulates in the world an abominable book, the mere reading of which would be blamable, and which deserves the strictest suppression, the paltry scoundrel has the impudence to proclaim me the author!* Upon which Oronte is seen to mutter, and basely endeavours to support the calumny! Oronte, who is said at Court to be an honourable man, and to whom I have done no other wrong than to have told him the honest truth. Oronte,

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* The first three Acts of 'Le Tartuffe' had been acted before the Court, and had exasperated the enemies of Molière; they had recourse to the most unworthy means to try and stop it. They accused Molière of being the author of an infamous libel then circulating in Paris.

who comes to me in spite of myself, eagerly to ask my opinion on verses of his making; and because I speak to him frankly, and betray neither him nor the truth, he helps to crush me with an imaginary crime! He becomes my greatest enemy, and will never forgive me, because, forsooth! I could not find his sonnet good. 'Sdeath! and men are made thus! It is to such actions that glory leads them! This is the good faith, virtuous zeal, justice, and honour we find among them! No, it is too much to endure all the sorrows their malice can devise against us; I will escape out of this wood, out of this cut-throat place; and since men behave like wolves to each other, the traitors shall never have me among them so long as I am alive.

PHIL. I still think that you are rather hasty in your decision, and the harm is not so great as you make out. What your adversary dares to impute to you has not been credited sufficiently for you to be arrested. His false report is falling of itself; and it is an action which well may turn against him.

ALC. Turn against him! He does not fear the odium attached to such practices; he has a licence to be an open villain, and far from injuring his position, the event will only put him to-morrow on a more solid footing than ever.

PHIL. Anyhow, it is evident that little attention has been paid to the report his malice spread against you; you have nothing to fear on that head, and as for your lawsuit, of which you have a right to complain, it will be easy for you to appeal against the judgment.

ALC. No, I will abide by it. However great the injury that such a verdict may do me, I will take good care it is not reversed. We see too plainly how right is abused, and I wish it to go down to posterity as a most striking sign of the times, and as an unmistakable proof of the wickedness of the men of our days. It is true that it may cost me some twenty thousand francs; but for twenty thousand francs I shall have the right to protest against the iniquity of mankind, and to nourish for it an undying hatred.

PHIL. But in short . . . .

ALC. But in short, your trouble is thrown away. What can you say to me on that head? Will you have the boldness to excuse before me the atrocious shame of all that is happening?

PHIL. No, I agree to all you please; everything goes on by intrigue and self-interest. It is cabal and cunning which carry the day, and men should act differently. But is their want of equity a sufficient reason for you to withdraw from their society? All these human failings give us opportunities of exercising our philosophy. It is the noblest use we can make of virtue: and if probity reigned everywhere; if all hearts were open, just, and tractable, most of our virtues would be useless to us: for we employ them to bear as well as we can with the injustice of others in our righteous cause; as it is for a true and virtuous heart to . . . .

ALC. I know that you speak wonderfully well, and that you are never wanting in fine reasoning; but you are wasting your time and all your noble speeches. Reason tells me that it is for my own good that I should retire. I have not power enough over my tongue, I could not answer for what I might say, and I should bring a thousand troubles upon my own head. Leave me here without any more words, to wait for Célimène. She will have to consent to the project which I have determined upon. I must, in short, see whether or not her heart feels any love for me, and I must now for ever be convinced of it.

PHIL. Let us go up to Eliante and wait for her there.

ALC. No, my mind is too much agitated; go and see her yourself, and leave me, I beg of you, in this dark corner alone with my gloomy sorrow.

PHIL. Strange company to help one to wait. I will ask Eliante to come down. (*Exit.*)

SCENE II.—CÉLIMÈNE, ORONTE, ALCESTE (*in the background*).

ORON. Yes, madam, you are to consider whether by ties so sweet I am to be for ever yours. I must have a decided answer as to your feelings for me. A lover cannot tolerate any ambiguity on such a point. If my ardent affection has

really touched your heart, you ought not to hesitate to tell me so; and after all, the proof I ask from you is the only wish that Alceste should, henceforth, no more pretend to your hand, that you should entirely give him up, and, in short, forbid him your house for ever.

CELI. But what can make you so angry with him? you whom I have heard speak so highly of him?

ORON. Madam, there is no need of these explanations: I only wish to know what your feelings are. Choose the one or the other; I am only waiting for your decision.

ALC. (*stepping forth*). Yes, this gentleman is right, madam, and you must choose; and his request entirely agrees with mine. The same impatience urges me, and the same anxiety brings me here. My love desires to receive from you an undoubted proof; the matter can be delayed no longer; the time has come for you to explain your feelings.

ORON. I have no wish, sir, that an importunate love should in any way interfere with your good fortune.

ALC. Sir, I do not wish, jealous or not jealous, to share her heart in anything with you.

ORON. If she can prefer your love to mine . . . .

ALC. If she possibly can have the least inclination for you . . . .

ORON. I swear to pretend no more to her.

ALC. And I emphatically swear no more to set eyes upon her.

ORON. Madam, it remains with you to speak without hesitation.

ALC. Madam, you can explain yourself without fear.

ORON. You have only to say which way your preference inclines.

ALC. You have nothing to do but to cut matters short and to choose between us.

ORON. What! you seem to find such a choice difficult!

ALC. What! you hesitate and appear undecided!

CELI. Gracious heavens! how importunate this persistence is, and how unreasonable you both are; my mind is made up, and my heart does not waver: it does not hesitate between you. Nothing is more easily decided than the

choice love makes. But I feel great repugnance to make a declaration of this kind before you both. I think that disobliging words should not be spoken in the presence of witnesses, that our heart gives enough tokens of its inclination without our being forced to an open quarrel with everyone, and that, in short, a lover should be given more gentle evidence of the ill-success of his attentions.

ORON. Not so, not so; I fear nothing from a frank avowal; on the contrary, as far as I am concerned, I wish for it.

ALC. And I demand it. It is an open declaration that I especially claim. I will not have any half measures. Your great study is how you can keep friends with everybody. But let us have no trifling, no more uncertainty; you must explain yourself openly, or else I shall take your refusal itself for a decision. I shall know, for my part, how to interpret your silence, and by it I shall understand the worst.

ORON. I am obliged to you, sir, for this anger, and I repeat all that you have said.

CELI. How you weary me with this caprice! Is there any common justice in what you ask of me? Have I not told you what motive restrains me . . . .? But Eliante is coming; she shall judge.

SCENE III.—ELIANTE, PHILINTE, CÉLIMÈNE, ORONTE, ALCESTE.

CELI. You see me here, cousin, persecuted by people who seem to have arranged their plans beforehand. Both, with the same peremptoriness, ask that I should declare the choice my heart has made; and that by a decision to be pronounced before them, I should forbid one of the two to continue his attentions. Tell me if such things are ever done?

ELI. Do not consult me upon such a matter; you may address yourself to the wrong person, and I am decidedly for those who speak their mind openly.

ORON. Madam, it is in vain for you to excuse yourself.

ALC. All your evasions will be but ill seconded here.

ORON. You must speak and decide.

ALC. You need only continue to be silent.

ORON. One word will be sufficient.

ALC. And I understand you even if you do not speak at all.

SCENE IV.—ARSINOË, CÉLIMÈNE, ELIANTE, ACASTE, PHILINTE, CLITANDRE, ORONTE.

ACA. (*to* CÉLIMÈNE). Madam, we come, with your permission, to try and clear up a certain trifling matter.

CLIT. (*to* ORONTE *and* ALCESTE). You are right welcome here, gentlemen, for you also are concerned in this business.

ARS. (*to* CÉLIMÈNE). You are no doubt surprised, madam, to see me here, but these gentlemen are the cause of my presence. They both came to see me, and both complained of a want of faith which I cannot believe you to be guilty of. I have too high an opinion of you; my eyes even refused to be convinced by the strongest proofs they showed me; and in my friendship, forgetful of the little misunderstanding we have had, I readily complied with their wish to come here with them, in order to see you clear yourself from such calumny.

ACA. Yes, madam, let us see with all due calmness how you will manage to explain the matter. This letter was written by you to Clitandre.

CLIT. And you wrote this affectionate note to Acaste.

ACA. (*to* ORONTE *and* ALCESTE). Gentlemen, this writing cannot be altogether unknown to you. I greatly fear, on the contrary, that her kindness has only too well acquainted you with her handwriting; still this is worth reading

(ACASTE *reads.*)

"You are a strange man to reprove my playfulness, and to reproach me with never being so merry as when I am not with you. There is nothing more unjust, and if you do not come at once and ask my pardon for this offence, I will never forgive you as long as I live. Our big gawky of a viscount"—he should have been here—"Our big gawky of a viscount, with whom you begin your complaints, is a

man who could never please me; and since the day that I watched him spitting in a well for full three-quarters of an hour, to make circles in the water, I have never been able to have a good opinion of him. As for the little marquis"—myself, gentlemen, let it be said without vanity—"As for the little marquis who held my hand so long yesterday, I think there is nothing so trivial as his whole person, and he is one of those men who have no other merit than what their tailor brings them. As for the man with the green ribbons"—(*to* ALCESTE) your turn now, sir,—"As for the man with the green ribbons, he amuses me sometimes with his bluntness and his irascible peevishness, but there are a thousand occasions when I think him the greatest bore in the world. As for the sonnet-maker"—(*to* ORONTE) now for your share, sir—"As for the sonnet-maker, who wants to pass for a clever wit, and will be an author in spite of everybody, I cannot even take the trouble of listening to what he says, and his prose is to me as bad as his verse. Understand, therefore, that I am not always as much entertained as you imagine; that I miss you more than I should care to say in all the entertainments to which I am forced to go, and that there is nothing like the society of those we love to enhance all kind of pleasure."

CLIT. Now it's my turn (*reads*): "Your Clitandre of whom you talk to me, and who affects such sweet manners, is the last man for whom I could feel any friendship. He is absurd enough to fancy that I love him, and you yourself are absurd to think that I do not love you. If you wish to be right, change feelings with him and come and see me as often as you possibly can, to lighten for me the misery of being persecuted by his presence." We see here the model of a fine character, madam; you know, no doubt, what name it deserves. It is enough; we shall both of us go and publish everywhere this noble picture of your heart. (*Exit.*)

ACA. I too could say something worth hearing, but I do not hold you worthy of my anger, and I will show you that little marquises can comfort themselves with nobler hearts than yours. (*Exit.*)

SCENE V.—CÉLIMÈNE, ELIANTE, ARSINOË, ALCESTE, ORONTE, PHILINTE.

ORON. What! am I to be treated in such a fashion after all you have written to me? and does your heart, with all the semblance of love, promise itself by turns to all mankind? I have been your dupe too long, and I will be so no longer. You render me an immense service in making me know you as you really are. All the affection I had bestowed upon you, comes back to me, and I find my revenge in knowing what you lose. (*to* ALCESTE) Sir, I no longer oppose your suit, and you are welcome to conclude matters with this lady.

SCENE VI.—CÉLIMÈNE, ELIANTE, ARSINOË, ALCESTE, PHILINTE.

ARS. (*to* CÉLIMÈNE). This is certainly, madam, the basest action that I have ever heard of; I can be silent no longer, so grieved do I feel. Did ever anybody hear of such conduct? I do not enter into the feelings of the others, but that this gentleman (*pointing to* ALCESTE), who had staked his whole happiness upon you—a man of merit and honour, who worshipped you with idolatry—should be . . . .

ALC. Ah! madam, leave to me, I pray, the management of my own business, and do not load yourself with superfluous cares. It is in vain that I see you take up my quarrel, my heart would not reward you for your disinterested zeal; and if I could think of avenging myself by another choice, you are not the person I should select.

ARS. Do you indeed, sir, fancy that I can have such a thought, and that I can be so desperately eager to secure you? That you have entertained such a thought argues, I fear, that you have no small opinion of yourself. The refuse of Célimène is a merchandise I should be wrong to prize. Pray be undeceived, and do not carry things with so high a hand. People like me are not for such as you; you will do right to sigh for her still, and I long to see so charming a match concluded. (*Exit.*)

SCENE VII.—CÉLIMÈNE, ELIANTE, ALCESTE, PHILINTE.

ALC. (*to* CÉLIMÈNE). Well, I have heard them all, and, in spite of what I see, I have kept silent; have I had command over myself long enough, and may I now . . . .?

CELI. Yes, you may say all you like; you have a right to complain and to reproach me with anything you please. I confess myself in the wrong, and in my confusion I have no wish to look for vain excuses. I have despised the anger of the others, but I acknowledge my faithlessness towards you; your resentment is just. I know how guilty I must seem to you, and that everything must seem to prove my fickleness; in short, that you have cause to hate me. Do so, I submit.

ALC. Can I cease to love you? Can I thus forget all my tenderness for you? I wish to hate you, but my heart refuses to obey. (*to* ELIANTE *and* PHILINTE) See to what an unworthy love can lead; be both of you witnesses of my infatuation. But this is not all, you will see me carry my weakness yet further; I will show you how wrongly we are called wise, and how in all hearts there still remains something of the man. (*to* CÉLIMÈNE) Yes, faithless woman, I willingly forgive you all my wrongs; I will find in my own heart an excuse for all your actions, and will lay the blame on the manners of the age, provided, however, that you agree to the resolution I have taken. It is this: you will henceforth shun all intercourse with mankind, and will follow me without delay into the solitude where I have vowed to live. It is only thus that you can redeem in the world's opinion the mischief your letters have done, and only thus that, after the scandal which a noble mind must abhor, my heart will still be able to love you.

CELI. What! renounce the world before I grow old, go and bury myself in the wilderness . . . .

ALC. But if your love answers to mine, what can be to you all the rest of the world; are not all your desires centred in me?

CELI. Solitude at twenty years of age frightens me. I do not find in my heart greatness and self-denial enough to yield to such a fate; if the gift of my hand can satisfy your wishes, I am willing; and marriage . . . .

ALC. No. Now my heart loathes you, and my love is at an end; since you cannot in me find your all in all as I do in you, go, I reject you: this unworthy insult for ever delivers my soul from the thraldom of my love.

(*Exit* CÉLIMÈNE.)

SCENE VIII.—ELIANTE, ALCESTE, PHILINTE.

ALC. (*to* ELIANTE). Your beauty, madam, is adorned by a thousand virtues, and it is only in you that I have seen sincerity and truth. I have for a long time set the highest value on you, but allow me thus only to esteem you for ever. My heart is afflicted by too many sorrows for me to dare to ask you to share my lot. I feel too unworthy of you, and I begin to understand that Heaven has not formed me for such happiness; that it would be doing you an unworthy homage to offer you a heart refused by another; in short . . . .

ELI. Do not make yourself anxious, I shall find no difficulty in bestowing my hand, and here is your friend who will not want pressing in order to accept it.

PHIL. Ah! madam, that honour is my only ambition, and I could sacrifice for it my soul, my life.

ALC. May you always experience the same feelings for each other, and be for ever happy! As to myself, betrayed on all sides, and crushed with injustice, I will escape from a gulf where vice triumphs, and look in all the earth for a desert place where one may be free to be a man of honour. (*Exit.*)

PHIL. Come, come, madam, let us exhaust every means to prevent him from putting his wild scheme into execution.

THE DOCTOR IN SPITE OF HIMSELF.

(LE MÉDECIN MALGRÉ LUI.)

'Le Médecin malgré lui' was acted five or six times with 'The Misanthrope' in June 1666. It was considered but a farce by Molière himself; but the piece was so full of fun and so amusing, that it obtained the greatest success.

Molière acted the part of Sganarelle.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

GÉRONTE, *father to* LUCINDE.

LÉANDRE, *lover to* LUCINDE.

SGANARELLE, *husband to* MARTINE.

MR. ROBERT, SGANARELLE'S *neighbour*.

LUCAS, *husband to* JACQUELINE.

VALÈRE, *servant to* GÉRONTE.

THIBAUT, PERRIN, *his son*, } *peasants*.

LUCINDE, *daughter to* GÉRONTE.

MARTINE, *wife to* SGANARELLE.

JACQUELINE (*a nurse*), *wife to* LUCAS.

THE DOCTOR IN SPITE OF HIMSELF.

ACT I.

(*The stage represents a forest.*)

SCENE I.—SGANARELLE, MARTINE. (*They come on the stage quarrelling.*)

SGAN. No, I tell you, I will do nothing of the kind. It is for me to speak and to be the master.

MAR. And I tell you that I will have you live as I please, and that I didn't go and marry you to bear with all your freaks.

SGAN. Oh! what an awful trouble it is to have a wife! How right Aristotle was when he said that a woman is worse than the devil!

MAR. Just hear the clever man, with his fool of an Aristotle.

SGAN. Ay, clever indeed! You go and find me a faggot-maker who can reason like me about everything; who has served for six years a most famous doctor, and who in his youth could say the Latin grammar by heart.*

MAR. Plague take the arrant ass!

SGAN. Plague take the trollop!

MAR. Cursed be the day and hour when I took it into my head to go and say "Yes!"

SGAN. Cursed be the old idiot who made me sign my ruin!

MAR. It becomes you well to complain of our marriage! Ought you not to thank Heaven every moment of your life for having me as a wife? And did you deserve, tell me, to marry a woman like me?

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* Compare p. 224.

SGAN. True, indeed! you honoured me too much, and I had cause to be satisfied on our wedding-day. Ecod! do not force me to speak of it, or I may say certain things . . . .

MAR. Well! What is it you'd say?

SGAN. Enough of that. It is sufficient that I know what I know, and that you were very lucky to have me.

MAR. What do you mean by my being lucky to have you? A man who reduces me to beggary; a debauched, deceitful villain, who eats up all I possess.

SGAN. That's a lie; I drink part of it.

MAR. Who sells, bit by bit, all that we have in the house.

SGAN. That is what is called living on one's means.

MAR. Who even sold the bed from under me.

SGAN. You'll get up all the earlier.

MAR. In short, who does not leave a single stick of furniture in the house . . . .

SGAN. We shall move all the more easily.

MAR. And who does nothing from morning to night but drink and gamble.

SGAN. That's for fear of the dumps.

MAR. And what can I do with the children all the time?

SGAN. Anything you like.

MAR. I have four little ones on my hands.

SGAN. Put them down on the ground.

MAR. They do nothing but ask for bread.

SGAN. Give them a flogging. When I have eaten and drunk my fill, I wish everybody to live on the fat of the land.

MAR. And do you think, drunkard, that things can always go on so?

SGAN. Now, my wife, gently, if you please.

MAR. That I must endure for ever your insolence and excesses.

SGAN. Do not get in a passion, my dear wife.

MAR. And that I shall not find the means of bringing you to a sense of your duty?

SGAN. My dear wife, you know that I am not very patient, and that I have a good strong arm.

MAR. I don't care for your threats.

SGAN. My little wife, my darling, your back itches as usual.

MAR. I will show you that I don't fear you at all.

SGAN. My dear, dear better-half, you intend to put me in your debt.

MAR. Do you think that what you say can frighten me?

SGAN. Tender object of my desire, I'll box your ears.

MAR. Drunkard!

SGAN. I'll beat you.

MAR. Wine-barrel!

SGAN. I'll thrash you.

MAR. Wretch!

SGAN. I'll give you a dressing.

MAR. Traitor! swaggerer! deceiver! coward! scamp! rascal! scoundrel! knave! cheat! blackguard! thief!

SGAN. So you will have it. (*Takes up a stick and beats his wife.*)

MAR. (*screaming*). Oh! oh! oh! oh!

SGAN. This is the way to make you hold your tongue.

SCENE II.—MR. ROBERT, SGANARELLE, MARTINE.

ROB. Hold! hold! hold! Fie upon you! What is the meaning of all this? What a shame! The scoundrel, to beat his wife in this way!

MAR. (*her arms akimbo, speaks to* MR. ROBERT, *drives him back, and at last gives him a box on the ear*). And if I wish him to beat me, what then?

ROB. Oh! I consent, with all my heart.

MAR. What are you meddling with?

ROB. I am in the wrong.

MAR. Is it any business of yours?

ROB. No, it is not; you are quite right.

MAR. The impertinent fellow, to wish to prevent husbands from beating their wives!

ROB. I retract.

MAR. What have you to say to it?

ROB. Nothing.

MAR. Have you any right to be poking your nose in here?

ROB. No.

MAR. Mind your own business.

ROB. I have no more to say.

MAR. I like to be beaten.

ROB. Very well.

MAR. You are not the one who feels it.

ROB. Quite true.

MAR. And you are a fool to thrust yourself where you are not wanted. (*She gives him another box on the ear; he passes over to* SGANARELLE, *who speaks to him in the same way, and at last strikes him with his stick.*)

ROB. Neighbour, I beg your pardon with all my heart. Go on, and thrash your wife soundly. I will even help you, if you like.

SGAN. I don't like.

ROB. Ah! that is another thing.

SGAN. I will beat her when I choose, and not beat her when I don't choose.

ROB. Very well.

SGAN. She is my wife, isn't she, and not yours?

ROB. There's no doubt about it.

SGAN. You have no business to order me.

ROB. I grant it.

SGAN. I don't want your help.

ROB. Let it be so.

SGAN. And you are an impudent fellow to interfere in other people's affairs. Know that Cicero said that we should never put the bark between the finger and the tree.* (*He drives him away, comes back to his wife, and takes her hand.*)

SCENE III.—SGANARELLE, MARTINE.

SGAN. Come, now, I say, let us make peace. Shake hands.

MAR. Yes, I should think so, after you have beaten me in that fashion!

SGAN. It is nothing. Shake hands.

MAR. No, I won't.

SGAN. Won't you?

MAR. No.

SGAN. My sweet wife!

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* Entre l'arbre et le doigt il ne faut pas mettre l'écorce.

MAR. No, I won't.
SGAN. Come, come, I say.
MAR. I will do nothing of the kind.
SGAN. Do, do, do.
MAR. No; I mean to be angry.
SGAN. Come; it was only a trifle. Come now, do.
MAR. Leave me alone.
SGAN. I say, shake hands.
MAR. You have ill-used me too much.
SGAN. There, now, I ask you to forgive me. Give me your hand.
MAR. Well, I forgive you; (*aside*) but I'll pay you out for it.
SGAN. You are a foolish woman to mind it. These are little trifles, quite necessary in love from time to time, and five or six strokes of a cudgel only serve to refresh the tenderness folks have for each other. There, I am going to the wood, and I promise that you shall have more than a hundred faggots to-day.

SCENE IV.—MARTINE (*alone*).

Yes, go. Whatever pretence I may make, I shall not forget my anger; and I long to pay you out for the blows you have given me. I know that it is always in the power of a wife to be revenged on her husband; but that punishment would be too delicate for my old reprobate. I must find a revenge which will sting more, for the other would not pay me for the ill-usage I have had to bear.

SCENE V.—VALÈRE, LUCAS, MARTINE.

LUC. (*to* VALÈRE, *without seeing* MARTINE). I'll be blowed if this isn't a pretty job to have took in hand; and I can't see, neither, what I be going to get by it.
VAL. (*without seeing* MARTINE). What is to be done, my poor foster-father? We must obey our master; and then you see we are somewhat interested in his daughter's health; for no doubt when her marriage, which has been put off through her illness, takes place, we shall be rewarded. Horace, who is a generous man, has reasons to

be concerned about her; and although she has shown a certain inclination for a young fellow called Léandre, you know that her father will never consent to have him for a son-in-law.

MAR. (*aside, thinking herself alone*). Can't I think of some plan to revenge myself?

LUC. (*to* VALÈRE). Whatever fancy has he been and got into his head now, since the doctors have all lost their reckoning about what to do?

VAL. We often find what we want by persisting in looking for it; and that, too, in the most unlikely places.

MAR. (*still thinking herself alone*). I will revenge myself at any cost. Those blows lie heavy on my stomach, and I can't digest them. (*She says all this thoughtfully to herself; and, not seeing the two men, knocks against them.*) Ah! I beg your pardon, gentlemen. I did not see you; I was puzzling my brains about something which bothers me.

VAL. We all have our cares in this world; and we also are looking for something which we would give much to find.

MAR. Is it anything in which I can help you?

VAL. You might, perhaps. We are looking for some clever man, for some skilful doctor, able to bring relief to our master's daughter, who has been suddenly deprived of the power of speech through an unaccountable illness. A great many doctors have already exhausted all their science in trying to cure her. Now, people are sometimes found who possess wonderful secrets—special remedies; these often succeed where the others have failed. This is what we are looking for.

MAR. (*aside*). Ah! I've got it. I have just thought of a trick to pay off that ruffian of mine. (*aloud*) You could not have met with anyone more able to direct you than I am. We have close by here, the most marvellously clever doctor for anyone whose case is despaired of.

VAL. Ah! I beseech you, tell us where we can find him?

MAR. You will find him at this moment, in that small wood yonder, amusing himself with chopping wood.

LUC. A doctor a-chopping wood!

VAL. You mean that he is looking for herbs?

MAR. No; he is a most extraordinary man, and likes

to do such things; a fantastical, eccentric, cross-grained fellow, and one that you would never at first take for what he really is. He goes about dressed in an absurd fashion, affects ignorance at times, hides all his knowledge, and avoids nothing so much as putting forth the talents for medicine he has received from Heaven.

VAL. It is a very strange thing that all great men have their whims; some small grain of madness mixed with their great learning.

MAR. This doctor's madness is even greater than you can imagine; for, at times, you must even have recourse to blows before you can make him acknowledge his ability: and I warn you that if he once takes this favourite whim of his into his head, you will each have to take a stick and beat him soundly before he will confess what he will have tried to hide from you at first. It is always what we do whenever we have need of him.

VAL. What an extraordinary whim!

MAR. So it is; but that once over, you will see him perform wonderful cures.

VAL. What is his name?

MAR. His name is Sganarelle. But he is easy enough to recognize. He has a thick black beard, and wears a ruff, and a yellow and green coat.

LUC. A coat all yellow and green! then he must be just fit to doctor parrots?

VAL. But are you quite sure that he is as clever as you say?

MAR. Sure? He works miracles! Six months ago there was a woman who had been given up by all the doctors. For six hours they thought her dead, and were just going to put her into a shroud, when they brought to her, in spite of himself, the man we are speaking of. He looked at her, put a little drop of I don't know what in her mouth, and at that very moment she got out of her bed and began to walk about the room as if she had never been ill at all.

LUC. Ah!

VAL. It must have been a drop of potable gold.*

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* Compare p. 231.

MAR. Perhaps so. Three weeks ago a child of about twelve years old fell from the top of the steeple into the street and broke his head, arms, and legs in his fall. They had no sooner brought our man than he began to rub him all over with some ointment which he makes himself, and the child started up at once on his feet and ran off to play.

LUC. Ah!

VAL. That man must be master of the Universal Medicine.

MAR. Nobody can doubt it.

LUC. By jingo! that's the very man for us. Let's look sharp and fetch him.

VAL. We are much obliged to you for the service you render us.

MAR. Only be sure you remember the caution I have given you.

LUC. My goodness! let us alone. If leathering is all we've got to do, the goose is cooked.

VAL. (*to* LUCAS). How fortunate we are to have met that woman! I feel buoyed up with the greatest hopes.

SCENE VI.—SGANARELLE, VALÈRE, LUCAS.

SGAN. (*singing behind the stage*). La, la, la . . . .

VAL. I hear somebody singing and chopping wood.

SGAN. (*coming on the stage, with a bottle in his hand, without seeing* VALÈRE *or* LUCAS). La, la, la . . . . So much work deserves a drop. Let us rest. (*He drinks.*) This wood is as salt as the very devil! (*Sings.*)

Sweet to me, my sparkling flask,
Is thy gurgling voice;
Nothing more I seek or ask,
With thee I rejoice.
Many a one would envy me,
Wert thou filled for ever.
Ah, my flask, long life to thee!
May thou empty never!

Blister me, if I don't feel better! One mustn't breed melancholy.

VAL. (*to* LUCAS). That's the man.

LUC. (*to* VALÈRE). I think you are about right, and that we've dropped straight on to his nose.

VAL. Let us go nearer.

SGAN. (*hugging his bottle*). Ah, little rogue! how much I love you, my little darling! (*sings. On seeing* VALÈRE *and* LUCAS, *who are examining him, he lowers his voice.*)

Many a one . . . would . . . envy me,
Wert thou . . .

(*seeing them examining him more narrowly*) Deuce take it! what can these people be after?

VAL. (*to* LUCAS). I am sure it is the man.

LUC. There he is, to a T, the very man they figured to us.

SGAN. (*puts his bottle on the ground.* VALÈRE *bows low to him, and* SGANARELLE *thinks he intends to rob him of his bottle; he therefore takes it up, and puts it on the other side.* LUCAS *bows to him in the same way, and he takes up his bottle and holds it close to his breast with different gestures.*) (*aside*) They are consulting each other and looking at me. What is the matter with them?

VAL. Sir, your name is Sganarelle, is it not?

SGAN. What do you say?

VAL. I ask you if your name is Sganarelle?

SGAN. (*turning first towards* VALÈRE, *then towards* LUCAS). Yes, and no, according to what you want of him.

VAL. We only want to do him all the good we can.

SGAN. In that case it is I who am called Sganarelle.

VAL. We are delighted to see you, sir. We have been recommended to you for what we want, and we come to ask the help of which we have need.

SGAN. If it is anything, gentlemen, with which my little trade can supply you, I am at your service.

VAL. You are too kind, sir. But put on your hat, I beg; the sun might inconvenience you.

LUC. Clap it on, sir.

SGAN. (*aside*). How very ceremonious these people are! (*Puts on his hat.*)

VAL. You must not be surprised, sir, that we come to you; clever people are always sought after, and we have been told of your ability.

SGAN. It is true, sir, that I am the best man in the world for making faggots.

VAL. Ah! sir . . . .

SGAN. I spare no trouble, and I make them in a fashion which satisfies everybody.

VAL. That is not what we came for.

SGAN. But, then, I sell them ten sous the hundred.

VAL. Do not mention that, I beg of you.

SGAN. I assure you that I cannot sell them for less.

VAL. Sir, we know how things stand.

SGAN. If you know how things stand, you know that I sell them at that price.

VAL. Sir, you are joking, and . . . .

SGAN. I am not joking; I can't take a farthing less.

VAL. Let us speak of something else, I pray.

SGAN. You can get them cheaper elsewhere. There are faggots and faggots, you know; but for those I make . . . .

VAL. Ah! sir, leave that subject alone.

SGAN. I assure you that I could not let you have them, were you to offer me only a farthing less.

VAL. Nonsense! Come!

SGAN. Upon my word, you'll have to pay that. I speak plainly; I am not a man to overcharge.

VAL. How sad, sir, to see a person of your position amusing himself with such absurd pretences—so clever a man as you are, so skilful a doctor, to try and hide himself from the eyes of the world, and to keep hidden the talents he possesses!

SGAN. (*aside*). He is crazy.

VAL. I beg of you, sir, not to dissemble with us.

SGAN. How? what?

LUC. All this shamming ain't no good. We knows what we're about.

SGAN. What, then? What do you mean? And whom do you take me for?

VAL. For what you are—a great doctor.

SGAN. Get along with you! I'm no doctor, nor ever have been.

VAL. (*aside*). His fit is coming on. (*aloud*) Sir, I beg of you, do not hide the truth any longer, and let us avoid all unpleasant extremities.

SGAN. What extremities?

VAL. Certain things which we should be sorry to have recourse to.

SGAN. By jingo! you may have recourse to all you please; I'm not a doctor, and don't understand what you mean.

VAL. (*aside*). I see that we must make use of the remedy. (*aloud*) Sir, I pray you once more to confess plainly what you are.

LUC. Bother! don't beat so about the bush no more; speak up, and say that you are a doctor.

SGAN. (*aside*). How mad I feel!

VAL. What is the use of denying what is known?

LUC. Why all those whims and fancies? Of what use is it all to you?

SGAN. Gentlemen, one word is as good as a thousand. I tell you that I am not a doctor.

VAL. You are not a doctor?

SGAN. No.

LUC. You ain't a doctor?

SGAN. No, I tell you.

VAL. Since you will have it, it must be so.

(*They each take a stick and beat him.*)

SGAN. Oh! oh! oh! Gentlemen, I am anything you please.

VAL. Why do you force us to use such violence, sir?

LUC. Why give us the trouble of bating you?

VAL. I assure you that I am exceedingly sorry for it.

LUC. And so am I, 'pon my word, uncommonly.

SGAN. What the deuce are you at, sirs? Tell me, pray, is it a joke, or are you both crazy, that you persist in calling me a doctor?

VAL. What! you have not made up your mind yet, and you still persist in denying that you are a doctor?

SGAN. Devil take me, if I am!

LUC. It ain't true that you are a doctor?

SGAN. No; choke me if I am. (*They beat him again.*) Oh! oh! gentlemen! Yes, since you wish it, I am a doctor, I am a doctor; an apothecary, also, if you have a mind to it. I'd rather consent to anything than to have my brains knocked out.

VAL. Ah! all right, sir; I am delighted to see you come back to reason.

LUC. It makes me quite happy like to hear you speak like that.

VAL. I sincerely beg of you to forgive me.

LUC. Pray excuse the libarty we've took.

SGAN. (*aside*). H'm! Is it I who am deceived, and have I not become a doctor without knowing it?

VAL. You will have no cause to repent, sir, of having told us the truth; and you will be sure to be satisfied.

SGAN. But, gentlemen, tell me, are you not deceiving yourselves? Is it quite certain that I am a doctor?

LUC. Yes, that you are, and no mistake neither.

SGAN. Really?

VAL. Undoubtedly.

SGAN. Deuce take me, if I knew it.

VAL. How! you are the most clever doctor in the world.

SGAN. Ah! ah!

LUC. A doctor what has cured I don't know how many diseases.

SGAN. Bless me!

VAL. A woman was thought to be dead for six hours; they were going to put her in a shroud, when, with a drop of something, you brought her back to life again and made her at once walk about the room.

SGAN. The plague I did!

LUC. A child twelve years old had fallen from the top of a steeple, and broke his head, legs, and arms. You, with I don't know what ointment, made him jump on his feet, and he went to play at pitch-farthing.

SGAN. The deuce I did!

VAL. In short, sir, you will be satisfied with us; and you will gain all the money you like by coming with us where we want to take you.

SGAN. I shall gain all the money I like?

VAL. Yes.

SGAN. Ah! I am a doctor most certainly. I had forgotten all about it, but I remember it now. What is there to be done? Where must I go?

VAL. We will go with you. We want you to come and see a young lady who has lost her speech.

SGAN. Faith! I have not found it.

VAL. (*aside to* LUCAS). He likes a joke. (*aloud*) Now, sir!

SGAN. Without a doctor's gown?

VAL. We will find you one.

SGAN. (*giving his bottle to* VALÈRE). Hold this, you; it is in this I put my julep. (*then turning towards* LUCAS, *and spitting on the ground*) You, put your foot upon this, by the doctor's order.

LUC. This doctor just suits me, and no mistake; he's safe to get on, 'cause he's a bit of a larker.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—GÉRONTE, VALÈRE, LUCAS, JACQUELINE.

(*The stage represents a room in* GÉRONTE'S *house.*)

VAL. Yes, sir, I think you will be pleased, for we have brought you the greatest doctor in the world.

LUC. Oh, my eyes! we must shut up shop beside him, and all the rest are not fit to wipe his shoes.

VAL. He is a man who has performed wonderful cures.

LUC. Why, he's cured people after they were dead.

VAL. He is rather whimsical, as I told you; and there are times when he does not seem to be what he really is.

LUC. Yes, he likes a bit of a joke, and you might say sometimes, saving your presence, that there's a screw loose in the upper story.

VAL. But at the bottom he is all knowledge, and he often says the most sublime things.

LUC. When he do begin, he talks right on like, just as if he read it all in a book.

VAL. His reputation is already known here, and people come to him from everywhere.

GER. I long to see him; send for him quickly.

VAL. I will go and fetch him.

SCENE II.—GÉRONTE, JACQUELINE, LUCAS.

JAC. This one'll do just the same as all the rest; and that you may depend upon, sir. I think it'll be six of one and half-a-dozen of t'other, and the best physic in the world that anybody can give your daughter, in my mind, would be a nice young husband—one that she could exactly fancy.

GER. I say, good nurse, you interfere in things that have nothing to do with you.

LUC. Be silent, mother Jacqueline; you've no right to be poking your nose in here.

JAC. I say, and I sticks to it, that all these doctors and their stuff will do no more good than clean water; your daughter wants something else besides rhubarb and senna. I say that a husband is the sort of plaster to cure girls' ailments.

GER. Is there any chance of her marrying now, when we see the infirmity with which she is afflicted? And when I thought of marrying her, did she not oppose my wishes?

JAC. I should just think she did. You wanted to hand her over to a man she didn't care a bit for. Why didn't you let her have the Mr. Léandre she was in love with? She'd have been good enough then; and I'd make a bet that he'd take her, here—now—just as she is, if only you'd let him have her.

GER. That Léandre is not the right man for her; he is not rich, like the other.

JAC. He's got a rich uncle, and he'll come into the money.

GER. These fortunes to come are all nonsense. There is nothing like certainty, and we run a great risk of reckoning without our host when we trust to the money that people are keeping for us. Death is not always ready to indulge the heir's wishes and prayers, and we may starve while waiting for dead men's shoes.

JAC. Well, I've always heard it said the same about marriage as about everything else: a contented mind's better than riches. Fathers and mothers, all alike, have the cursed way of asking, "What's he got?" "What's

she got?" There was neighbour Peter. Didn't he go and marry his girl Simonette to the great rough Thomas, just because he'd got a little bit of ground more than the young Robin that she was in love with. Look at the poor thing; she's come so yellow's a guinea, and hasn't never been right ever since. Here's a proper warning for you, master. What's all the world if you can't be happy! and I'd sooner let my maid have a young fellow that she really fancied, than all the riches of India.

GER. Bother you, nurse, what a yarn you spin! Be more calm, I pray; you trouble yourself too much about all this. You'll spoil your milk.

LUC. (*striking* GÉRONTE *at each sentence*). Blow you! hold your tongue, you sauce-box! Master don't want your jaw, and he knows well enough what he's about. There, you go and nurse the baby, without having so much to say about everything. Master is father to his own child, and he's good enough and 'cute enough to see what ought to be done.

GER. Gently, gently!

LUC. (*still striking* GÉRONTE'S *shoulder at each sentence*). I want to take her down a peg, sir, and teach her how she ought to behave to you.

GER. Very well! but you needn't gesticulate so much.

SCENE III.—VALÈRE, SGANARELLE, GÉRONTE, LUCAS, JACQUELINE.

VAL. Sir, prepare yourself, here is the doctor coming in.

GER. (*to* SGANARELLE). Sir, I am delighted to see you, and we have great need of you.

SGAN. (*in a doctor's gown with a very pointed hat*). Hippocrates says . . . . that we must both put on our hats.

GER. Hippocrates says that?

SGAN. Yes.

GER. In what chapter, if you please?

SGAN. In his chapter . . . . upon hats.

GER. Since Hippocrates says so, we must do it.

SGAN. As we have been told, sir, of the wonderful cures you have . . . .

GER. Pray, to whom are you speaking?

SGAN. To you.
GER. I am not a doctor.
SGAN. You are not a doctor?
GER. No, indeed.
SGAN. Really?
GER. Really.
(SGANARELLE *takes a stick and beats* GÉRONTE *in the same way that he was beaten.*)
GER. Oh! oh! oh!
SGAN. Now you are a doctor! I have had no other licence.
GER. (*to* VALÈRE). What a devil of a fellow have you brought in here?
VAL. I told you he was rather eccentric.
GER. Yes; but I'll send him about his business with his eccentricity.
LUC. Don't mind that, sir, 'twas only a joke.
GER. Joke! I do not care for this kind of joking.
SGAN. Sir, I beg your pardon for the liberty I have taken.
GER. Sir, your servant.
SGAN. I am sorry . . . .
GER. Never mind.
SGAN. For the beating . . . .
GER. There is no harm done.
SGAN. Which I have had the honour of giving you.
GER. Let us speak no more about that, sir. I have a daughter who has fallen ill of a strange disease.
SGAN. I am delighted, sir, that your daughter has need of my care; and I wish, with all my heart, that you and all your family were ill, so that I might show you the pleasure I have in serving you.
GER. I am much obliged to you for these good wishes.
SGAN. I assure you that I speak from the heart.
GER. You do me too great an honour.
SGAN. What is the name of your daughter?
GER. Lucinde.
SGAN. Lucinde! Ah! what a charming name to physic! Lucinde!
GER. I will go and see what she is doing.
SGAN. Who is that tall woman there?
GER. The nurse of a little child of mine.

SCENE IV.—SGANARELLE, JACQUELINE, LUCAS.

SGAN. (*aside*). What a handsome piece of furniture! (*aloud*) Ah! nurse, charming nurse, my doctorship is the very humble servant of your nurseship, and I heartily wish I were the fortunate baby you nurse. All my remedies, all my science, all my abilities, are at your service; and . . . .

LUC. By your leave, Mr. Doctor, let my wife alone, please.

SGAN. What! she's your wife?

LUC. Yes.

SGAN. Ah! really, I did not know that, and I am quite rejoiced, for both your sakes. (*He pretends to embrace* LUCAS, *but embraces the nurse.*)

LUC. (*drawing* SGANARELLE *away and placing himself between him and his wife*). Sober, if you please.

SGAN. I assure you that I am delighted to see that you are married. I congratulate her on having a husband like you; and I congratulate you on having such a handsome wife—so good, and so well made. (*Affecting again to embrace* LUCAS, *who holds out his arms, he passes under them, and embraces the nurse.*)

LUC. (*pulling him away again*). Oh, the devil! stop that sort of work, I say.

SGAN. Don't you wish me to rejoice with you over such a jolly meeting?

LUC. As much as you like with me, but with my wife cut your palaver short.

SGAN. I take an equal interest in the good fortune of you both. I embrace you to show you how much I rejoice at your happiness. I embrace her to show her how much I rejoice at hers. (*Same by-play as before.*)

LUC. (*drawing him away the third time*). Oh, 'pon my word, doctor, you're too free by half! Pretty larks, to be sure!

SCENE V.—GÉRONTE, SGANARELLE, LUCAS, JACQUELINE.

GER. Sir, they will bring you my daughter directly.

SGAN. I am waiting for her with all the powers of medicine.

GER. Where are they?

SGAN. (*touching his forehead*). Here.

GER. Very well.

SGAN. (*going up to the nurse*). As I feel the greatest interest in all your family, I must just see after the nurse &c. (*approaches* JACQUELINE).

LUC. (*pulling him away and making him spin round*). No! no! I can manage all that.

SGAN. It is the business of the doctor to see to the nurse.

LUC. That's no business of yours—your servant, sir.

SGAN. Do you dare to oppose the doctor? Out of my way.

LUC. Poh! I don't care for that.

SGAN. (*looking at him angrily*). I will give you the fever.

JAC. (*taking* LUCAS *by the arm and making him turn round about also*). Get out o' that now. Ain't I big enough to take care of myself, if he does anything he didn't ought to?

LUC. I won't have him touching you, that I won't!

SGAN. Fie! for shame. You lout! To be jealous of your wife!

GER. Here is my daughter.

SCENE VI.—LUCINDE, GÉRONTE, SGANARELLE, VALÈRE, LUCAS, JACQUELINE.

SGAN. Is this the patient?

GER. Yes, sir, she is my only daughter, and it would be the greatest grief in the world to me if she were to die.

SGAN. She must not! She must not die without the doctor's prescription.

GER. Bring some seats.

SGAN. (*seated between* GÉRONTE *and* LUCINDE). This patient is not so very disagreeable, and I think that a healthy man could well make shift with her.

GER. You have made her laugh, sir!

SGAN. So much the better; when the doctor makes the patient laugh, it is the best symptom one could wish for.

(*to* LUCINDE) Well! and what is the matter? What is it? What kind of a pain is it you feel?

LUCI. (*answers by signs, putting her hand first to her mouth, then under her chin*). Han, hi, hon, han.

SGAN. What is it you say?

LUCI. Han, hi, hon, han, hi, hon.

SGAN. What?

LUCI. Han, hi, hon, han.

SGAN. (*imitating her*). Han, hi, hon, han, han. The deuce a bit do I understand. Whatever language is that?

GER. Sir, this is her disease. She became dumb without anyone understanding the cause; and this accident is the reason of her marriage being put off.

SGAN. But, why?

GER. The man who is to marry her wishes to wait until she is cured, before he concludes the marriage.

SGAN. And who is this fool, who does not want his wife to be dumb? I wish mine were seized with the same disease! I should take good care not to cure her, I can tell you.

GER. In short, sir, I beg of you, do all you can to relieve my daughter's malady.

SGAN. Oh! do not be anxious. Tell me; does this illness oppress her very much?

GER. Yes, sir!

SGAN. So much the better. Has she great pains, &c.?

GER. Very great.

SGAN. That's good. (*turning round to the patient*) Give me your arm. (*to* GÉRONTE) This pulse, here, shows that your daughter is dumb.

GER. Yes, indeed, sir, and that is the disease she is suffering from; you have found it out at once.

SGAN. Eh! eh!

JAC. Just see how he's found out the ailment!

SGAN. We great doctors, we know things instantly. An ignorant fellow would have been puzzled, and would have told you, "It is this, or it is that," but I, from the first moment, come to the point, and I declare to you that your daughter is dumb.

GER. Yes, that is quite true; but I should like you to tell me from what cause it proceeds.

SGAN. There is nothing easier; it is caused by her having lost her speech.

GER. Yes. But the cause, if you please, for her losing her speech?

SGAN. All our best authors will tell you that it comes from an impediment in the action of her tongue.

GER. But, still, what is your opinion on this impediment in the action of her tongue?

SGAN. Aristotle, on that subject, says . . . . wonderful things!

GER. I believe you.

SGAN. Ah! he was a great man!

GER. Undoubtedly.

SGAN. Altogether a great man. (*raising his arm above his head*) Greater than I am by all this. To come back to our reasoning then; I hold that this impediment in the action of her tongue is caused by certain humours which we learned men call peccant humours, that is to say . . . . peccant humours; for, as the vapours formed by the exhalations of the influences which arise in the region of diseases coming . . . . as it were . . . . to . . . . Do you understand Latin?

GER. Not in the least.

SGAN. (*rising abruptly*). You don't understand Latin?

GER. No.

SGAN. (*with enthusiasm*). *Cabricias, arci thuram, catalamulus, singulariter, nominativo, hæc musa*, the muse, *bonus, bona, bonum. Deus sanctus, est-ne oratio latinas? Etiam*, Yes. *Quare?* Why? *Quia substantivo, et adjectivum, concordat in generi numerum et casus.*

GER. Ah that I had studied Latin!

JAC. See what a clever man he is!

LUC. Sure enough, that's so fine that I can't make out never a bit of it.

SGAN. Now, these vapours of which I have been speaking to you, in passing from the left side where the liver is, to the right side where the heart is, it happens that the lungs, which we call in Latin *armyan*, communicating with the brain, which we call in Greek *nasmus*, by the means of the concave vein, which we call in Hebrew, *cubile*, meets on its way the said vapours, which fill the ventricles of the

omoplate: and as the said vapours . . . . follow closely this reasoning, I beg of you: and as the said vapours have a certain malignity . . . . Listen to this, I beseech you.

GER. Yes.

SGAN. Have a certain malignity which is caused . . . . Be attentive, if you please.

GER. I am so.

SGAN. Which is caused by the acrimony of the humours engendered in the concavity of the diaphragm. It so happens that these vapours . . . . *Ossabandus, nequeis, nequer potarinum, quipsa milus.* This is precisely the cause why your daughter is dumb.

JAC. Ah! how well said all that is, old man!

LUC. If I'd got but a tongue so well oiled!

GER. No reasoning could be better, I think. There is only one thing which struck me as not quite clear; it is the places you give to the liver and the heart. It seems to me that you place them differently from what they really are; that the heart is on the left side, and the liver on the right side.

SGAN. Yes, it was so formerly; but we have altered all that, and we now practise medicine in quite a new way.

GER. I did not know that, and I beg you will excuse my ignorance.

SGAN. There is no harm done; it cannot be expected that you should be as clever as we are.

GER. Assuredly. But, sir, what remedy do you think this disease requires?

SGAN. What remedy it requires?

GER. Yes.

SGAN. My advice is, that she be sent back to her bed; and that for remedy you give her a large quantity of bread soaked in wine.

GER. Why so, sir?

SGAN. Because there is in wine and bread mixed a sympathetic virtue which is conducive to speech. Do you not see that we give nothing else to parrots, and that they learn to talk by feeding on them?

GER. You are right! Ah! the great man! Quick! bring a large quantity of bread and wine.

SGAN. I will come back towards the evening to see how he is.

SCENE VII.—GÉRONTE, SGANARELLE, JACQUELINE.

SGAN. (*to* JACQUELINE). You stop here, you. (*to* GÉRONTE) Sir, your nurse is in need of little remedies from me.

JAC. Who? me? I never was better in my life.

SGAN. So much the worse, nurse, so much the worse. This superabundance of health forebodes some evil; and it would not be amiss to bleed you gently, and administer a little dulcifying injection.

GER. But, sir, this is a system which I do not understand. Why should we be bled when we are not ill?

SGAN. No matter why, the method is salutary; and in the same way that we drink for the thirst that would come, so must we be bled against the coming illness.

JAC. (*going away*). My goodness! what do I care for all that? I ain't a-going to turn my body into a druggister's shop.

SGAN. You rebel against remedies, but we shall find out a way of bringing you to reason.

SCENE VIII.—GÉRONTE, SGANARELLE.

SGAN. (*going away*). I wish you good morning, sir.

GER. Just wait one moment, if you please.

SGAN. What is it you want?

GER. To give you your fee, sir.

SGAN. (*holding out his hand from under his gown whilst* GÉRONTE *opens his purse*). I could not take any, sir.

GER. Sir . . . .

SGAN. No, indeed.

GER. One moment.

SGAN. No, certainly.

GER. I beseech you!

SGAN. You are joking!

GER. There it is.

SGAN. I will not.

GER. Eh!

SGAN. I do not practise for the sake of money.

GER. I am sure you do not.

SGAN. (*after having received the money*). Is it of good weight?

GER. Yes, sir.
SGAN. I am not a mercenary doctor.
GER. I know it well.
SGAN. I am not governed by interested motives.
GER. I had no thought of the kind. (*Exit.*)
SGAN. (*alone, looking at the money he has received*). Well, this is very pleasant; and, provided that . . . .

SCENE IX.—LÉANDRE, SGANARELLE.

LEA. Sir, I have been watching for you a long time, and I come to implore you to give us your assistance.
SGAN. (*feeling his pulse*). Your pulse is very bad.
LEA. I am not ill, sir; I have not come to see you for that.
SGAN. If you are not ill, why the deuce don't you begin by saying so?
LEA. No, I am not. To tell you what brings me in as few words as possible, you must know that my name is Léandre, and that I am in love with Lucinde, whom you have just seen. Through the unkindness of her father, it is impossible for me to get access to her; I therefore make bold to come and ask you kindly to lend me your help, and to assist me in carrying out a plan I have made to speak to her a few words, upon which the happiness of my whole life depends.
SGAN. (*affecting to be angry*). For what do you take me? How dare you ask me to serve your love, and to lower the dignity of a doctor by such an employment!
LEA. Sir, do not make a noise.
SGAN. I will make a noise, sir. You are an impertinent fellow, sir.
LEA. Ah! gently, sir.
SGAN. A man of no judgment.
LEA. I beseech you!
SGAN. I will teach you that I am not one to do such thing, and that it is an extreme insolence in you to . . . .
LEA. (*taking his purse out*). Sir . . . .
SGAN. Wish to make use of me! . . . . (*taking the purse*) I do not speak of you, sir; you are an honest man, and I shall be delighted to help you. But you meet

with certain coxcombs in this world who take people for what they are not, and I assure you that I am greatly incensed against such people.

LEA. I beg your pardon, sir, for the liberty I . . . .

SGAN. Pray no more about that. What is it you want?

LEA. I must tell you, sir, that this illness which you want to cure is a sham. The doctors have reasoned at full length upon the matter, and they have not failed to say that it proceeds, one from the brain, another from the intestines, another from the spleen, another from the liver; but the truth is that it only proceeds from love, that Lucinde has found out this way of putting off a marriage which is hateful to her. But, for fear we should be seen together, let us leave this place. I will tell you, as we are walking along, in what way I want your help.

SGAN. Let us go, then, sir; you have inspired me with an inconceivable interest in your love; and I will risk all my physic upon the result. Either the patient shall go to the wall, or be yours.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—LÉANDRE, SGANARELLE.

(*The stage represents a place close to* GÉRONTE'S *house.*)

LEA. I think I make a very good apothecary; and, as the father has hardly ever seen me, this change of dress and this wig are sufficient, I think, for him not to know me.

SGAN. I think so, too.

LEA. I only wish I knew five or six long Latin words, to adorn my talk and to look clever with.

SGAN. Nonsense. You have no need of that, the dress is quite sufficient; I know no more of the matter than you do.

LEA. How! What?

SGAN. Deuce take me if I understand one word about physic! You are a gentleman, and I will trust you as you trust me.

LEA. What? Are you not really . . . .

SGAN. No, I tell you; they made a doctor of me in spite of myself. I had never dreamt of being so learned as that, and all my studies came to an end in the lowest form. I can't imagine what put that whim into their heads; but when I saw that they were resolved to force me to be a doctor, I made up my mind to be one at the expense of those I might have to do with. Yet you would hardly believe how the error has spread abroad, and how everyone is obstinately determined to see a great doctor in me. They come to fetch me from right and left; and if things go on in that fashion, I think I had better stick to physic all my life. I find it the best of trades; for, whether we are right or wrong, we are paid equally well. We are never responsible for the bad work, and we cut away as we please in the stuff we work on. A shoemaker in making shoes can't spoil a scrap of leather without having to pay for it, but we can spoil a man without paying one farthing for the damage done. The blunders are not ours, and the fault is always that of the dead man. In short, the best part of this profession is, that there exists among the dead an honesty, a discretion that nothing can surpass; and never as yet has one been known to complain of the doctor who had killed him.

LEA. It is true that the dead are very excellent people in that respect.

SGAN. (*seeing some men coming to him*). Here are some people who seem to want to consult me. (*to* LÉANDRE) Go and wait for me near the house of your lady-love.

SCENE II.—THIBAUT, PERRIN, SGANARELLE.

THI. Master, we was a-coming to look for you, my boy Perrin and me.

SGAN. What's the matter?

THI. His poor mother, she's called Perrette, have been bad abed these six months.

SGAN. (*holding out his hand as to receive money*). What do you wish me to do?

THI. I wanted to see if you couldn't gi' me a drop of stuff to do her good, sir.

SGAN. We'll see. What is the matter with her?

THI. She's very bad with the hypocrisy, sir.

SGAN. Hypocrisy?

THI. Yes, sure; that is, she's a-swelled all over like, and they say that she's got a lot of seriosities inside her, and that her liver and bowels, or her spleen, as you would call it, instead of makin' of blood, it turns all to water. Every other day the dissentery fever comes on, with lassychils and pains in the sinnies of her legs. You can hear in her poor throat the flames that most chokes her; and sometimes she've got the singcups and the conversions, so bad that I most think she's a-goin'. We've got in our village a druggister, as mid'say, and he've let her have, I can't tell how many different sorts of stuff; and 't'ave a-cost me a good three pound in lotions, if you please, in apériments, that she've a-got to take, in affections of hyacins, and in cordial mixtures, and that. But all of it, as mid'say, is no more than a chip in the porridge. He wanted to give her some stuff, they call antemile wine; but I was afeard that would send her right home; and they say that these hedge-boar doctors* do kill more people than any body can tell, with this here new-fangled physic.

SGAN. (*still holding out his hand, and moving it about to show that he must have money*). Let us come to the point, friend, let us come to the point.

THI. The point is, sir, that we be come to ask you what we must do.

SGAN. I do not understand you in the least.

PER. My mother is very bad, sir, and here we've brought you half-a-sovereign to let us have stuff to do her good.

SGAN. Ah! I understand you. This lad now speaks plainly, and explains himself as he should. You say that your mother is ill with dropsy, that she is swollen all over, that she is feverish with pains in the muscles of her legs, and that she has at times fainting fits and convulsions?

PER. Yes, sir, that's just how 'tis.

SGAN. I understood what you said at once. You have

* Gros médecins.

a father who does not know what he says. Now, you want me to give you some remedy?

PER. Yes, sir.

SGAN. A remedy to cure her?

PER. That's what we want, sir.

SGAN. Here, take this piece of cheese, and you must see that she eats it.

PER. Cheese! sir?

SGAN. Yes, cheese, but one in the preparation of which there is gold, coral, pearls, and a quantity of other precious things.

PER. Sir, we be much obliged to you, and we will make her take it directly.

SGAN. Go, and if she dies, don't fail to give her a decent funeral.

SCENE III.—JACQUELINE, SGANARELLE, LUCAS (*further back on the stage*).

(*The stage represents, as in the Second Act, a room in* GÉRONTE'S *house.*)

SGAN. Here is the handsome nurse. Ah, nurse of my heart, I am overjoyed at this meeting; and a sight of you is the rhubarb, cassia, and senna which drives all melancholy from my heart.

JAC. Goodness me, Doctor! that's too fine talk for me! and I can't make out a word of your Latin.

SGAN. Pray fall sick, nurse, fall sick for my sake. I should be so happy to have to cure you.

JAC. Your sarvant, sir, but I'd ever so much sooner not have to be cured.

SGAN. How I pity you, beautiful nurse, to have such a troublesome and jealous husband!

JAC. What can you expect? I'm only paid home for my own faults; and as you've made your bed, so you must lie.

SGAN. How! a boor like that! a man who is always watching you, and won't allow anybody to speak to you!

JAC. Ah! you haven't seen nothing yet; that's only a bit of a sample of his bad temper.

SGAN. Is it possible? And can a man be so base as to

ill-treat a handsome woman like you? Ah! beautiful nurse, I know of some one not far from here who would give much only to kiss the tip of your tiny toes. Why must such a handsome woman fall into such hands? a real brute, a ruffian, a stupid, a fool . . . . forgive me, nurse, if I speak in that way of your husband.

JAC. Oh, dear! I know well enough, sir, that he deserves all you have called him.

SGAN. There is no doubt but that he deserves them all, and he well deserves, besides, that you should put something on his head to punish him for his suspicions.

JAC. 'Tis certain that if I kept a sharp eye only upon his business, he'd force me to do something queer.

SGAN. Indeed, you would not be wrong to revenge yourself on him with somebody. He is a man who richly deserves it, I tell you; and if I were fortunate enough, fair nurse, to be chosen for . . . . (*He stretches out both his arms to embrace her;* LUCAS *thrusts his head quickly under them, and places himself between* SGANARELLE *and* JACQUELINE. SGANARELLE *and* JACQUELINE *look at* LUCAS, *and go away one on each side, the Doctor with much amusing by-play.*)

SCENE IV.—GÉRONTE, LUCAS.

GER. Halloa, Lucas, have you not seen our doctor about here?

LUC. Yes, the rascal, I have, and so has my wife.

GER. Where can he be?

LUC. I don't know, but I wish he was gone to the devil!

GER. Go and see what my daughter is doing.

SCENE V.—SGANARELLE, LÉANDRE, GÉRONTE.

GER. Ah! sir, I was inquiring where you were.

SGAN. I was amusing myself in your yard . . . . How is the patient?

GER. A little worse since your remedy.

SGAN. So much the better; it is a sign that it is doing some good.

GER. Yes; but, in the meantime, I am afraid of its choking her.

SGAN. Do not fret; I have remedies which conquer

everything, and I am looking forward to the time that she is at death's door.

GER. (*showing* LÉANDRE). Who is that man you have brought here?

SGAN. (*making signs with his hand to show that it is an apothecary*). It is . . . .

GER. What?

SGAN. He, who . . . .

GER. You say?

SGAN. Who . . . .

GER. I understand you.

SGAN. Your daughter will want him.

SCENE VI.—LUCINDE, GÉRONTE, LÉANDRE, JACQUELINE, SGANARELLE.

JAC. Master, here's your daughter, and she wants to walk.

SGAN. It will do her good. Go to her, Mr. Apothecary, and feel her pulse, that I may be able to consult with you afterwards about her illness. (*In the meantime, he takes* GÉRONTE *to one side of the stage, and, passing one arm over his shoulder, prevents him from turning his head whenever he wants to see what his daughter and the apothecary are doing together. In the meantime he speaks as follows.*) Sir, it is a great and subtle question amongst doctors whether women are easier to cure than men. Pray listen to this. Some say no; some say yes; and I say both yes and no; forasmuch as the incongruity of the opaque humours which are generally found in the natural temperament of women, being the cause that the animal part overcomes the spiritual, we see that the inequality of their opinions depends on the oblique motions of the circle of the moon; and as the sun, which sends its rays on the concavity of the earth, finds . . . .

LUCI. (*to* LÉANDRE). No, I can never change my sentiments.

GER. My daughter speaks! Oh! the great power of medicine! Admirable doctor! How immensely obliged I am to you, sir, for this marvellous cure! What can I do to repay you for such a service?

SGAN. (*walking about the stage and fanning himself with his hat*). Really, this illness has given me a great deal of trouble!

LUCI. Yes, father, I have recovered my speech, but only to tell you that I will have no other husband than Léandre, and that it is quite useless for you to try and marry me to Horace.

GER. But . . . .

LUCI. Nothing can make me change the resolution I have taken.

GER. What!

LUCI. In vain would you give me fine reasons.

GER. If . . . .

LUCI. All you say will be of no use.

GER. I . . . .

LUCI. I am determined not to do it.

GER. But . . . .

LUCI. No paternal authority can force me to marry against my wish.

GER. I have . . . .

LUCI. All you do will be in vain.

GER. He . . . .

LUCI. My heart cannot submit to such a tyranny.

GER. The . . . .

LUCI. And I had rather become a nun than marry a man for whom I have no love.

GER. But . . . .

LUCI. (*speaking in a shrieking tone*). No! It is of no use! It's time lost! You waste your breath. I will do nothing of the kind, I am determined!

GER. Ah! what a rush of words! One can't stand it. (*to* SGANARELLE) Sir, I beg you to make her dumb again.

SGAN. This is a thing impossible for me to do. All I can do, to serve you, is to make you deaf, if you like.

GER. Many thanks. (*to* LUCINDE) Do you believe that . . . .

LUCI. No; all your reasons will have no power over me.

GER. You will marry Horace this very evening.

LUCI. I had rather marry death itself.

SGAN. (*to* GÉRONTE). Pray, do not go on. Leave it to ne to apply my remedies to this affair. She is under the nfluence of disease, and I know the remedy for it.

GER. Is it possible, sir, that you can cure this disease f the mind also?

SGAN. Yes; leave it to me; I have remedies for every- hing; and our apothecary is the man for this cure. (*to* ÉANDRE) One word. You see that the passion she has or that Léandre is altogether contrary to her father's ishes; that there is no time to lose; that the humours re very acrimonious; and that it is important to find out a rompt remedy for this evil, which might increase by pro- rastination. For my part, I can only think of one remedy r it, which is a detergent dose of flight, which you must ix as well as you can with two drachms of matrimonium pills. Perhaps she will object to this remedy; but you re a clever man in your calling. It is your business to rce her to it, and make her swallow the dose as well as ou can. Go and make her take a turn in the garden, in rder to prepare the humours. In the meantime, I will nverse here with her father; but, above all things, do ot waste time. The remedy, at once; the specific, with- ut loss of time!

SCENE VII.—GÉRONTE, SGANARELLE.

GER. What drugs are these, sir, that you have just rdered? I have never heard of them before, as far as I m recollect.

SGAN. These drugs are employed in urgent cases.

GER. Did you ever see insolence like hers?

SGAN. Girls are, at times, rather obstinate.

GER. You can hardly think how she dotes upon that éandre.

SGAN. The heat of the blood often causes such things in oung people.

GER. For my part, as soon as I discovered the violence f this love, I took care to keep my daughter locked up.

SGAN. You acted very wisely.

GER. And I prevented all kind of communication etween them.

SGAN. You were right.

GER. Some folly or other would have happened if I had allowed them to see each other.

SGAN. Undoubtedly.

GER. And I believe she is a girl capable of having run away with him.

SGAN. You acted very prudently.

GER. I have been told that he tries every means of speaking to her.

SGAN. The wretch!

GER. But he will lose his time.

SGAN. Ah! ah!

GER. And I shall take good care that he does not see her.

SGAN. He hasn't to do with a fool; you know more tricks than he kens of! A man must get up early to catch you napping!

SCENE VIII.—LUCAS, GÉRONTE, SGANARELLE.

LUC. Oh Lor'! master, here's a pretty kettle of fish! Your daughter's been and bolted off with her Léandre. Why, 'twas he that was the druggister all the time, sir—and this be the doctor what's done this very pretty operation here.

GER. How! deceive me in this fashion! Quick! fetch the police! Prevent him from escaping! Ah! villain, you will be brought to justice!

LUC. Aye, aye, Mr. Doctor, you'll swing for it. Only you budge from where you are, that's all.

SCENE IX.—MARTINE, SGANARELLE, LUCAS.

MAR. (*to* LUCAS). Oh, dear! what trouble I have had in finding this place out! Give me, please, some news of the doctor I recommended to you.

LUC. There he is, and just going to be hanged, too.

MAR. What! my husband hanged! Alas! how can he have deserved that?

LUC. Why, he's stold our master's daughter.

MAR. Alas! my dear husband, is it quite true that they are going to hang you?

SGAN. You see. Ah!

MAR. Must you die in the presence of so many people?

SGAN. What can I do?

MAR. If only you had finished chopping our wood, I should comfort myself a little.

SGAN. Go away; you break my heart.

MAR. No, I will stop to encourage you to die, and I will not leave you before I have seen you hanged.

SGAN. Ah!

SCENE X.—GÉRONTE, SGANARELLE, MARTINE.

GER. (*to* SGANARELLE). The commissaries will soon come; they will put you in a place where they will answer for you.

SGAN. (*on his knees, his tall hat in his hand*). Alas! can't this be changed for a good drubbing?

GER. No, no, I leave it to the law. But what do I see?

SCENE XI.—GÉRONTE, LÉANDRE, LUCINDE, SGANARELLE, LUCAS, MARTINE.

LEA. Sir, I appear before you, and I wish to put Lucinde again in your power. Our intention was to run away and get married, but this intention has given place to a more honourable proceeding. I have no wish to steal your daughter from you, and I want to receive her from your own hand. What I have to tell you, sir, is, that I have just received letters which tell me of my uncle's death, and that I am the sole heir to all his fortune.

GER. Sir, I have the greatest consideration for your virtue, and I give you my daughter with the greatest pleasure.

SGAN. (*aside*). Well, medicine has had a narrow escape.

MAR. Since you will not be hanged, thank me, at least, for being a doctor; it was I who brought all that honour upon you.

SGAN. Yes, it is you who brought the blows upon my shoulders.

LEA. (*to* SGANARELLE). The result is too good a one for you to bear a grudge against her.

SGAN. Be it so. (*to* MARTINE) I forgive you the beating, because of the dignity to which you have raised me; but prepare yourself in future to live in the utmost awe of a man of my consequence, and remember that the wrath of a doctor is more to be feared than anyone can imagine.

MELICERTE.

(MÉLICERTE.)

This is an unfinished heroic-pastoral which Molière had intended to compose, it is said, entirely to show off the talents of Baron, then only fifteen years old, and whom he loved like a son. Young Baron, however, quarrelled with Molière's wife, and refused to stay with Molière, who, having no longer in view the end he had proposed to himself, put the play aside. It was acted but once, at the fêtes of Saint-Germain, and called 'Le Ballet des Muses,' on the 2nd of December, 1666.

Molière acted the part of Lycarsis; Baron that of Myrtil.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

MYRTIL, *in love with* MÉLICERTE.

ACANTHE, *in love with* DAPHNÉ.

TYRÈNE, *in love with* EROXÈNE.

LYCARSIS, *shepherd, believed to be* MYRTIL'S *father.*

NICANDRE, *shepherd.*

MOPSE, *shepherd, believed to be* MÉLICERTE'S *uncle.*

MÉLICERTE,
DAPHNÉ,
EROXÈNE, } *shepherdesses.*

CORINNE, *confidante of* MÉLICERTE.

The scene is in Thessaly, in the valley of Tempe.

MELICERTE.

ACT I.

Scene I.—Daphné, Eroxène, Acanthe, Tyrène.

Acan. Ah! charming Daphné!
Tyr. Ah! lovely Eroxène!
Daph. Leave me, Acanthe.
Erox. Follow me not, Tyrène.
Acan. (*to* Daphné). Why do you send me away?
Tyr. (*to* Eroxène). Why do you fly from me?
Daph. (*to* Acanthe). I like you better away.
Erox. (*to* Tyrène). I am happier where you are not.
Acan. Will you never cease this mortal coldness?
Tyr. Will you never cease to be thus cruel?
Daph. Will you never cease your useless entreaties?
Erox. Will you never cease so to persecute me?
Acan. If you take no pity upon me, I die
Tyr. If you do not succour me, my death is but too certain.
Daph. If you do not go, I will leave this place.
Erox. If you stop here, I will bid you farewell.
Acan. If so, to satisfy you, I will go away.
Tyr. My leaving will rid you of an odious sight.
Acan. Kind Eroxène, I beseech you, for pity's sake, speak to her in favour of my love!
Tyr. Gracious Daphné, speak to this cruel beauty, and learn why she has such hatred for me.

Scene II.—Daphné, Eroxène.

Erox. Acanthe has merit, and deeply loves you. How is it that you treat him so cruelly?

DAPH. Tyrène is worthy of love, and languishes for you. How is it that you behold his tears without pity?

EROX. Since I was the first to ask a question, it is just you should be the first to answer me.

DAPH. I am insensible to Acanthe's love, because another love has touched my heart.

EROX. I treat Tyrène with coldness, because my heart has made another choice.

DAPH. May I know this choice you hide from all?

EROX. Yes, if you will tell me what yours can be.

DAPH. Without naming to you him that love has made me choose, I can easily satisfy your wish, for I have a portrait of him here, made by the inimitable painter Atis. In it even the most insignificant features so resemble him that you are sure at once to know him.

EROX. I can satisfy you in the same way, and repay your discretion in like manner. I have also from this famous painter a lovely picture of him I love, so true to his features and his enchanting grace, that at first sight you can yourself name him.

DAPH. The case which the painter has had made for me is exactly like the one you have.

EROX. It is true that both are extremely alike, and Atis must have had them made at the same time.

DAPH. Let us together by means of these few tints take each other into the secret of our hearts.

EROX. Let us see who will the sooner understand this language, and which of the two works will the more plainly speak.

DAPH. Your mistake is amusing and comical; how you have mixed them. Instead of your portrait, you give mine back to me.

EROX. It is true; I do not understand how I did it.

DAPH. Give it me. Ah! you were dreaming, I see!

EROX. What does this mean? We surely are joking with each other. You have done with these portraits what I already did.

DAPH. True, it is enough to make us both laugh. Restore me mine.

EROX. (*putting the two portraits side by side*). This is the way not to make a mistake.

DAPH. Is this an illusion of my prepossessed heart?

EROX. Are my eyes deceived by my mind?

DAPH. Myrtil is present to my sight in this work.

EROX. The features of Myrtil are there before me.

DAPH. It is young Myrtil who called forth my love!

EROX. It is young Myrtil after whom I sigh!

DAPH. I came to-day to ask you to tell him with what interest his merit inspires me.

EROX. I was looking for you in hopes you would serve me in securing his heart.

DAPH. Is this love with which he inspires you so very strong?

EROX. Do you love him with so violent a love?

DAPH. There is no coldness he could not conquer, and his youthful attractions must delight everyone.

EROX. There is no nymph who would not be happy to love him. Diana herself could do so without shame.

DAPH. His charming looks alone can now touch me, and had I a hundred hearts they would all be his.

EROX. My eyes can see nothing but him, and had I a crown he should be master of it.

DAPH. Then it would be in vain to ask either of us to drive this love from our hearts. It has taken too deep roots in them. All we have now to do is to try to remain friends; and since we both at the same time, for the same cause, have taken a like resolution, let us be frank in our dealings, let us take no base advantage of each other, but go at once and tell Lycarsis of the tender feelings we have for his son.

EROX. I can hardly understand, so great is my surprise, how such a son could have such a father; his shape, his mien, his speech, and his eyes would make one believe he came from the gods. But I willingly agree: let us go and find him; tell him of the secret that fills our heart; and consent afterwards that Myrtil, by his choice, shall decide between us.

DAPH. Be it so. I see Lycarsis with Mopse and Nicandre. Perhaps they may leave him now; let us hide and wait till they do.

SCENE III.—LYCARSIS, MOPSE, NICANDRE.

NIC. (*to* LYCARSIS). Then tell it us, your news.

LYC. Ah! how impatient you are! it is not as easily said as you think.

MOP. What foolish affectation and trifling! Ménalque could not do more when asked to sing.

LYC. Among those who are anxious to know the secrets of the state, news to tell is a grand thing. I wish for awhile to be considered a man of importance, and to enjoy your impatience a little.

NIC. Do you wish to vex us both with your delay?

MOP. Do you find any charm in making yourself unpleasant?

NIC. For pity's sake, speak and have done with this shuffling.

LYC. Well, you must both, then, ask me in a proper way, and tell me what gift you will make me if I do as you wish.

MOP. Plague take the coxcomb! Let us leave him alone, Nicandre, he is more anxious to speak than we are to hear; his news is burdensome to him, he wants to get rid of it; and not to listen to him will vex him most surely.

LYC. Let it be so.

NIC. There, you are punished for your strange ways.

LYC. Well, now, I will tell you: listen.

MOP. No, no.

LYC. What! you won't hear me?

NIC. No.

LYC. Very well, I will not speak another word, and you shall know nothing.

MOP. Well and good.

LYC. Then you will not know that the king is coming with great magnificence to honour Tempe with his presence; that yesterday at noon he entered Larissa; that I was able to contemplate him at leisure there with all his court; that these woods will to-day be blessed with the sight of him, and that there are many rumours afloat to explain his coming.

NIC. We have no wish to know anything.

LYC. I saw there a thousand things most delightful to behold. Lords in plenty who from head to foot are adorned, as it were, for a holiday; they astonish one's eyes; and our meadows in spring with all their flowers are not so dazzling. As for the prince, he at once is easily distinguished from among them all, and even at a distance looks like a great monarch. In all his person there is a something which at once tells you that he is a king among kings. He plays his part with matchless grace, and, to say the truth, is wondrous to behold. You could never believe how eagerly everyone watches for a glance from him; there reigns around him a pleasant confusion, and you would think it a swarm of brilliant flies attracted by a sweet honeycomb. In short, there is nothing more beautiful under heaven; and the feast of the god Pan, so much thought of among us, is as nothing compared to such a sight.—But since you are so proud, I shall tell you nothing.

MOP. And we have no wish to hear it.

LYC. Get along with you.

MOP. Go and be hanged!

SCENE IV.—EROXÈNE, DAPHNÉ, LYCARSIS.

LYC. *(thinking himself alone)*. Thus are people punished when they play the fool and are insolent.

DAPH. May Heaven ever keep your sheep in good health, shepherd!

EROX. May Ceres always fill all your barns with corn!

LYC. May the great Pan give each of you a spouse who will love you much and be worthy of you!

DAPH. Ah! Lycarsis, the wishes of us both tend to one and the same end.

EROX. For the same object are the sighs of both our hearts.

DAPH. And Love, that child which causes our pain, found in you the shaft which wounds our hearts.

EROX. And we come here to seek your alliance, and to see which of us two will be preferred.

LYC. Nymphs . . . .

DAPH. It is the only good for which we crave.

LYC. I am . . . .

EROX. All our wishes are for that happiness.

DAPH. We are perhaps too free in expressing our thoughts.

LYC. Why?

EROX. Modesty may be somewhat offended.

LYC. Ay! Not at all.

DAPH. But when in one's heart there burns a pure flame, one can without shame freely avow it.

LYC. I . . . .

EROX. Such freedom should be allowed to us, and the beauty of our choice authorizes it.

LYC. You wound my modesty by flattering me thus.

EROX. Nay, nay, there is for you no need of modesty

DAPH. In short, all our happiness is in your power.

EROX. Our only hope depends on you.

DAPH. Shall we meet with difficulties in you?

LYC. Ah!

EROX. Tell us, will our wishes be rejected?

LYC. No, I received from Heaven a kind soul. I am like my late wife in that, and, like her, I feel great weakness for the desires of others. I am not a proud man.

DAPH. Then grant Myrtil to our ardent love.

EROX. And suffer that his choice may end our quarrel.

LYC. Myrtil!

DAPH. Yes, it is Myrtil we want you to grant us.

EROX. Whom did you think we meant, then?

LYC. I know not; but Myrtil is not of an age to take upon himself the yoke of matrimony.

DAPH. His growing merit may strike other eyes, and we want to secure to ourselves so precious a jewel, to forestall others, and to brave the strokes of fortune under the firm bonds of a common chain.

EROX. As by his wit and other brilliant perfections he is above all other youths of his age, so shall our love be towards him, and regulate its wishes in accordance with his wonderful merit.

LYC. It is true that for his age he is wonderful. That Athenian, who stopped two years in my house, finding him so handsome, took it into his head to fill his brain with his philosophy. He has made him so clever on many subjects that, old as I am, he often puzzles me. But, after all that,

he is still a child, and there is much innocence intermingled with all he does.

DAPH. He is not so much of a child but that, if I may judge by what I have daily seen of him, he is already struck with a beginning of love, and closely follows young Mélicerte.

EROX. They may be in love with each other, and I see . . . .

LYC. You are altogether mistaken. As for her, it is all very well, she is two years older than he is, and two years for her sex mean a great deal. But sport alone has charms for him, and what he cares most for is to go about dressed like the shepherds of good standing.

DAPH. In short, we would wish to link his destiny to ours by marriage.

EROX. We are both equally eager to secure in advance the conquest of his heart.

LYC. I feel more honoured by your choice than you could believe. I am but a poor shepherd; and it is a great glory to me that two nymphs of the highest rank in the country should dispute to be my son's wife. Since you wish it to be so, I consent to leave it to his choice, and the one left aside by his decision may, to comfort herself, marry me if she likes. It is the same blood, and almost the same thing. But here he comes. Suffer me to prepare his mind a little. He holds in his hand some sparrow newly caught; such are his loves and pastimes.

SCENE V.—EROXÈNE, DAPHNÉ, AND LYCARSIS (*at the farther end of the stage*), MYRTIL.

MYR. (*believing himself alone, and carrying a sparrow in a cage*). Thou harmless little thing, which struggles thus before me against the bars that stop thy flight, bewail not thy loss of liberty. Thy fate is glorious; it is for Mélicerte that I have caught thee. She will take thee in her lovely hands and kiss thee; nay, she will grant thee the favour of nestling in her bosom. Is there in all the world a sweeter and a happier lot? What king, alas! O happy little bird, would not be willing to change places with thee!

LYC. Myrtil, Myrtil, one word with you. Leave these

trifles, we have something else to do here than to play with sparrows. These two nymphs, Myrtil, lay claim to you at the same time, and, although you are so young, wish to have you for their husband. I promised to grant you to them, to engage you to them by marriage, and it is for you to choose one of them.

MYR. These nymphs?

LYC. Yes, of the two you may choose one; see what happiness is yours, and bless your fortune.

MYR. Can this proffered choice be happiness, if my heart desires it not?

LYC. In short be proud of it, and without confusion answer as you should to the honour that is done you.

EROX. Notwithstanding the pride which reigns among us, behold two nymphs, O Myrtil, who offer themselves to you; the wonders they discern in you force them here to reverse the order of things.

DAPH. We leave you, Myrtil, as the best judge, to follow your heart and your eyes in this matter; we have no wish to influence your decision by any description of our merits.

MYR. You do me an honour which surprises me, but it must be acknowledged that it is too great for me. I must oppose myself to your wondrous goodness, I am too insignificant to deserve such a fortune, and it would grieve me, whatever delight this union would bring, if you were blamed for the choice you had made.

EROX. Comply with our wishes, whatever others may say to it, and do not be anxious for our glory.

DAPH. No, think not so humbly of yourself, and allow us to judge of the fate you deserve.

MYR. The choice you offer to me opposes your very expectations, and must of itself prevent my heart from satisfying you. How could I choose between two great beauties equal in birth, equal in rare perfections? To reject the one or the other is a dreadful offence, and to choose neither is much more reasonable.

EROX. But by refusing to grant us what we ask, instead of offending one, you offend us both, Myrtil.

DAPH. Since we both agree to stand by your decision, the reason you advance cannot relieve you.

MYR. Well, then! since these reasons do not satisfy you, this one will: I love another, and I feel that a heart deeply in love is insensible and deaf to all other advantages.

LYC. How! what is this! who could ever have thought it? Do you even know, boy, what love is?

MYR. My heart has learnt it without being taught.

LYC. But against this love are all my wishes.

MYR. You should not, then, if this displeases you, have given me a heart tender and sensitive.

LYC. But the heart that I have given you owes me obedience.

MYR. Yes, when it is in its power to obey.

LYC. But, in short, it ought not to love without my leave.

MYR. You must prevent it then from being charmed.

LYC. I forbid you to let this go on.

MYR. I fear that you forbid it too late.

LYC. What! has not a father superior rights?

MYR. The gods, who are much greater than fathers, do no violence to our hearts.

LYC. The gods . . . . Peace, little fool; this philosophy makes me . . . .

DAPH. I pray you, be not angry with him.

LYC. No, I will have him take one of you for his wife, or before you both I will whip him; ah! ah! I will make him feel that I am his father.

DAPH. Pray let us arrange matters without anger.

EROX. May we know who this charming person is, whose beauty makes Myrtil love her?

MYR. Mélicerte, madam; others, too, may love her.

EROX. Do you, O Myrtil, compare her attractions to ours?

DAPH. Can you hesitate before such a choice?

MYR. In Heaven's name, O nymphs, speak no ill of her. Consider that I love her, and, if by loving her I outrage your heavenly charms, remember that she has no share in that wrong. The offence comes wholly from me. It is true that there exists a great difference between you and her, but we are not masters of our own destiny: and I feel but too well, O nymphs, that I have received from

Heaven for you the deepest respect, and for her the greatest love. Alas! I see by the blush which mantles your cheeks that what I say gives you no pleasure. My heart fears to hear in your answers what would wound it in its most tender part, and to save myself from such pain, O nymphs, I prefer to take my leave.

LYC. Myrtil, ho! Myrtil, come back, traitor! He has fled; but we will still see which of us two shall be master. Fear nothing from these idle fancies; you shall have him for a husband. My life shall answer for it.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—MÉLICERTE, CORINNE.

MEL. Ah! Corinne, do you say you have heard it from Stella, and that it was Lycarsis who gave her the news?

COR. Yes.

MEL. That the charms which adorn Myrtil caused both Eroxène and Daphné to fall in love with him?

COR. Yes.

MEL. That they so desire to obtain him that, both together, they have already asked his hand? and that they have decided to marry him at once? Ah! how unwilling you are to speak! How very little my anxiety touches you!

COR. What more do you want? That is the truth, and you repeat all I said exactly as I told it to you.

MEL. But how does Lycarsis look upon this affair?

COR. As an honour which can but please him greatly.

MEL. And do you not see, you who know my love, that you pierce my very heart with all your words?

COR. How so?

MEL. By showing me that implacable destiny makes me as nothing compared to them; that they will be chosen in preference to me because of their rank; is it not enough to make me despair?

COR. I merely answer you, and only say what I think.

MEL. Ah! you will kill me by your indifference. But tell me, how did Myrtil act in all this?

COR. I do not know.

MEL. Cruel Corinne, it was what you should have tried to learn.

COR. Alas! I hardly know what to do, and in everything you find fault with me.

MEL. It is because you will not understand, alas, the trouble of a heart in love! Go, leave me here to spend in solitude some of my anxious moments.

SCENE II.—MÉLICERTE (*alone*).

You see, and too well, my heart, what it is to love. Bélise, my dear mother, knew it also. Once before her death she told me, on the banks of the Peneus, "My daughter, beware! To young hearts Love always presents himself surrounded by sweet charms. At first he offers all that is pleasant, but in his train come fearful troubles; and if you wish to spend your days in anything like peace, always defend yourself from his darts as from a dire evil." I had not forgotten her lessons; and when Myrtil came, when he played and made himself useful to me, I always told thee, O my heart, that thou shouldst take less delight in it. But thou didst not believe me, and thy kindness was soon changed into far too great tenderness. In this growing love which pleases thy desires, thou thoughtest of nothing but pleasure and joy. Now behold the cruel misfortune with which thou art threatened and the deadly pangs which thou art reduced to endure. O my heart! O my heart! I warned thee.—But let us, if we can, keep our grief secret; here is . . . .

SCENE III.—MYRTIL, MÉLICERTE.

MYR. I have a prisoner, charming Mélicerte, which I keep for you, and of which, it may be, I shall ere long become jealous. It is a young sparrow which I mean to tame with the greatest care in order to offer it to you. The present is not great, but the gods themselves consider the wish of the heart only. Yes, it is the intention which

gives value to everything, and never the cost of . . . . But, heavens! why this sadness? What ails you, Mélicerte? what deep grief is there seen in your beautiful eyes? You do not answer me; and your sad silence increases my pain and my impatience. Speak! What sorrow disturbs you? What is it?

MEL. Nothing.

MYR. Nothing, say you? and yet your eyes are filled with tears; can those two things agree? Ah! charming beauty! make no secret of it, it would kill me; tell me, alas! what these tears mean?

MEL. It would be of no use for me to tell you.

MYR. Ought you to keep anything from me? and do you not offend our love by endeavouring to rob me of my share in your troubles? Pray, do not hide it from my ardent love.

MEL. Well then, Myrtil, I must tell it you. I have heard that by a choice which honours you, Eroxène and Daphné wish you to marry one of them, and I confess to you that I am weak enough not to hear this without grief and without accusing the hard fate which makes their vows preferred to mine.

MYR. And you can give way to this unjust sorrow, you can accuse my love of weakness, and believe that, being bound by such sweet charms as yours, I can ever belong to another! that I could accept any other hand offered to me! Ah! what have I done, cruel Mélicerte, that you treat my love so unjustly, and pass such an unkind judgment on my heart? What! can you possibly distrust it? How unhappy I am at such a suspicion! Alas! what good is it for me to love as I do, if you are so ready to disbelieve me?

MEL. I could fear those rivals less, Myrtil, if things were equal on both sides; and if I occupied the same rank, I might dare to hope that love would make you prefer me to them. But the inequality of wealth and birth, which makes the difference between them and me . . . .

MYR. Ah! their rank will never tempt my heart, and your divine charms are everything to me. I love you; it is enough. In your person I see rank, treasures, wealth, kingdoms, sceptres, and crowns! Were I offered the

power of the greatest monarch, I would not exchange for it the happiness of possessing you! This is the sincere and pure truth, and to doubt it would be to do me wrong.

MEL. Well! Myrtil, I believe you, since you wish it; I believe that your heart is not shaken by their high rank, and that although they may be noble, rich, and fair, your heart loves me enough to prefer me to them; but it is not the voice of love which you will obey; your father, Myrtil, must overrule your choice, and I am not so dear to him as I am to you, and he will not prefer a simple shepherdess to everyone else.

MYR. No, my dear Mélicerte, there is no father, no god, who can force me to forswear the love I have for you! Ever as now queen of my desires . . . .

MEL. Ah! Myrtil, be careful what you do. Offer not to my heart a hope it would be too happy to cherish, and which, vanishing afterwards like the flash of lightning, would render my misfortune more dreadful to bear.

MYR. What! must I have recourse to oaths when I promise to love you for ever? How you wrong yourself with such alarms! How little you know the power of your beauty! Well! since you wish it, I swear by the gods. and if this is not enough I swear by your eyes, that I had rather die than forsake you. Receive here the word I give you, and allow my lips with joy to seal my oath on this fair hand.

MEL. Ah, Myrtil, arise; what if you were seen!

MYR. Is there anything . . . . O heavens! some one has come to disturb my bliss.

SCENE IV.—LYCARSIS, MYRTIL, MÉLICERTE.

LYC. Do not let me disturb you.

MEL. (*aside*). Ah! cruel fate!

LYC. You are doing it very well: please to go on both of you. Zounds! my little son, how tender you look, and in what a masterly way you set about it already! Has that learned man, exiled from Athens, taught you also those pretty things in his philosophy? And you, who so gracefully gave him your hand to kiss, the sweet shepherdess,

does honour teach you these tender ways by which you seduce young hearts?

MYR. Ah! cease from such insulting insinuations, and do not crush me with words that wound her.

LYC. I will speak to her. All this caressing . . . .

MYR. I will not allow you to use her ill. As I am your son I am forced to respect you, but upon myself I can punish you for this insult. Yes, I call Heaven to witness that if, in spite of me, you add one more cruel word to what you have already said, this sword will do her justice, and my streaming blood will show her this moment the horror I feel for your abusive words.

MEL. No, no; do not fear that I would by artful devices seduce his heart. If he loves to see me, and wishes me well, it is of his own free will; I do not force him. I do not mean to say that my heart does not answer his vows. I love him—I own it—as much as it is possible for one to love. But this love need not alarm you; and, in order to spare you all unjust fears, I here promise you to avoid his presence, to submit to the choice you make, and not to suffer his love till he has your consent.

SCENE V.—LYCARSIS, MYRTIL.

MYR. She leaves us, and you triumph. Her words must satisfy you; but know that you will rejoice in vain, you shall be deceived in your expectations; and, do what you will, your power shall never conquer my determination.

LYC. How! what pride is this, sirrah? Is it thus that you should speak to me?

MYR. Yes, I am wrong, it is true: I should not show anger to you; you rightly recall me to my duty, and I should speak to you differently. I beseech you, father, in the name of the gods, and by all you hold precious, not to make use, in this circumstance, of the power Nature gives you over me. Do not poison your best gifts. I owe my being to you; but what thanks shall I owe you if, alas! you render life unbearable to me? Without Mélicerte, life becomes a burden to me; without her charms to bless me, I care for nothing. She is my happiness, and all I

live for; if you take her from me, you deprive me of life itself.

LYC. (*aside*). I cannot help sharing the grief of his heart. Who would ever have expected this from the little rascal? What love! What raptures! What rhapsodies for one of his age! I am amazed, and already feel interested in his love.

MYR. (*on his knees before* LYCARSIS). Say, do you order me to die? Speak; I am ready to obey.

LYC. (*aside*). I can resist it no more; he will make me weep, and his gentle words take away my wrath.

MYR. If in your heart there is still some love left, and you can pity my destiny, grant Mélicerte to my ardent love, and you will do more than give me life.

LYC. Arise.

MYR. Will you yield to my entreaties?

LYC. Yes.

MYR. Will you grant me the object of my desires?

LYC. Yes.

MYR. You will see that her uncle gives me her hand?

LYC. Yes; arise, I say.

MYR. O best of fathers! after so much kindness, let me kiss your hands.

LYC. Ah, how weak fathers are for their children! and how impossible they find it to refuse anything to their tender words! What delight they feel in thinking that they are part of themselves!

MYR. You will keep your promise? you will not change your mind?

LYC. No.

MYR. Will you give me leave to disobey you, if you are tempted to change your promise? Say!

LYC. Yes. Ah, nature! nature! I will go and see Mopse, and tell him of the love you and his niece have for one another.

MYR. Ah! what do I not owe to your great goodness! (*alone*) What pleasing news to take to Mélicerte! I would not accept a crown in exchange for the pleasure of telling her of this happy success.

SCENE VI.—ACANTHE, TYRÈNE, MYRTIL.

ACAN. Ah! Myrtil, you have received from Heaven gifts which have caused us many tears; and your youthful charms, fatal to us, have taken from us the hearts of those we love.

TYR. May we know, Myrtil, upon which of those two fair ones will turn the choice everybody speaks of, and which of us two will have to receive the blow which is to crush every hope?

ACAN. Keep two lovers no longer in suspense, and tell us what fate your heart reserves for us.

TYR. It is better, when we fear such a terrible misfortune, to be killed at once than to linger so long.

MYR. Calm yourselves, noble shepherds. The lovely Mélicerte has captivated my soul. With her my destiny is happy enough. There is no wish in me to take aught from you; and, if your love had only mine to fear, neither of you will have any cause to complain.

ACAN. Ah! Myrtil! is it true that two unfortunate lovers . . . .

TYR. Is it true that Heaven, feeling for our pain . . . .

MYR. Yes, pleased with my bonds as with a victory, I have excused myself from such a glorious choice. I have made my father change his mind and consent to my happiness.

ACAN. (*to* TYRÈNE). O miracle! what an obstacle removed from the path of our love!

TYR. (*to* ACANTHE). It may restore the two nymphs to us, and be the means of making us both happy.

SCENE VII.—NICANDRE, MYRTIL, ACANTHE, TYRÈNE.

NIC. Do you know where Mélicerte hides herself?

MYR. What?

NIC. She is being sent for in all haste.

MYR. And why?

NIC. We are going to lose the beautiful maiden. It is for her that the King has come hither, with a great lord to whom he is going to marry her.

MYR. Oh, Heaven! Explain to me all this.

NIC. They are wonderful and mysterious events. Yes, the King has come to fetch Mélicerte; and it is said that one Bélise, her mother, who was thought by all to be Mopse's sister . . . . But I have undertaken to look for her everywhere. You will hear the whole story from beginning to end by and by.

MYR. O gods! what a hard destiny! Tell me, Nicandre! Nicandre!

ACAN. Let us also follow him, that we may learn all the news.*

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* See Prefatory Notice.

THE SICILIAN;

OR, LOVE THE PAINTER.

(LE SICILIEN; OU L'AMOUR PEINTRE.)

'Le Sicilien' is a comedy-ballet in one act. It had been composed for the Fêtes de Saint-Germain, which were given again on the 15th of January, 1667; and merely, according to the king's wish, to bring Turks and Moors on the stage. M. Taschereau justly remarks that we are now far from the times when a caprice of the kind could give birth to works of such value. Till then plays in one act had been considered, like farces, as meant to rest the mind from the attention given to the serious drama. This play seems to have been the germ of the modern opéra-comique. Many great personages of the Court figured in it: the king, M. le Grand, the Marquises de Villeroi and de Rassan, as Moors of quality; Madame and Mademoiselle de la Vallière, Madame de Rochefort and Mademoiselle de Brancos, as Moorish ladies, &c. &c.

It was acted in Paris on the 10th of June, 1667. Molière, who had been absent from the theatre through the illness which was to prove fatal to him, played Don Pedro.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

DON PEDRO, *a Sicilian gentleman.*

ADRASTE, *a French gentleman, in love with* ISIDORE.

A SENATOR.

ISIDORE, *a Grecian slave belonging to* DON PEDRO.

ZAÏDE, *a young slave girl.*

HALI, *a Turk, slave to* ADRASTE.

Two Servants.

Musicians; Slaves singing; Slaves dancing; Moors of both sexes dancing.

THE SICILIAN:

OR, LOVE THE PAINTER.

ACT I.

Scene I.—Hali, Musicians.

Hali. (*to the Musicians*). Hush! come no farther. Stop where you are, until I call you.

Scene II.—Hali (*alone*).

It is as dark as in an oven; the sky has dressed himself to-night Scaramouche* fashion, and I don't see one single star showing the tip of its nose. What an absurd life is that of a slave! Never to live for oneself; to be always at the beck and call of a master's passions; to be governed only by caprices, and reduced to make all the whims and fancies he takes into his head the business of one's life! Just think of mine, who makes me share all his anxieties, and, because he is in love, allows me, forsooth, no rest either by night or by day. But here are torches; no doubt it is he who is coming.

Scene III.—Adraste, Hali, two Servants (*each carrying a torch*).

Ad. Is it you, Hali?

Hali. And who else could it be, but Hali? I doubt if anybody, sir, but you and I would dream of being in the streets at this time of night.

---

* A comic character, dressed in black

AD. Very likely; for no one, I am sure, suffers so much as I do. For it is nothing, after all, to have to conquer the indifference or coldness of the beauty we love. We have then, at least, the comfort of complaining and the liberty of sighing; but not to be able to find a single opportunity of speaking to her whom we adore, not to be able to discover whether the love she has inspired is welcome or unwelcome to her: this is, I think, the most trying of all anxieties; and yet it is to this misery that I am reduced by the jealous fellow who watches so narrowly over my charming Greek, and who never stirs a step without dragging her after him.

HALI. But love can express itself in many ways, and it seems to me that your eyes and hers have for the last two months said a good many things.

AD. It is true that we have often spoken to each other with our eyes; but how can we find out if we have explained to ourselves the language as we should? How can I know, after all, if she understands aright the true meaning of what my eyes tell her? and if hers really tell me all I seem at times to read there?

HALI. We must find out some other way for you to speak to her.

AD. Have you your musicians with you?

HALI. Yes.

AD. Bring them here. (*alone*) I will make them sing here until daybreak, and see whether their music will not bring my beloved to the window.

SCENE IV.—ADRASTE, HALI, MUSICIANS.

HALI. Here they are. What must they sing?

AD. What they think best.

HALI. They must sing, then, a trio that they sang to me the other day.

AD. No, that is not what I want.

HALI. Ah! sir, it's in a fine major key.

AD. What the deuce do you mean by your fine major key?

HALI. Ah! sir, I'm for the major key. I need not tell you that I know all about it. The major key charms me;

there's no harmony without the major key. Listen to this trio for one minute.

AD. No, I will have something tender and full of passion, something which maintains a soft reverie within me.

HALI. I see that you are for the minor key; but there are means of satisfying us both. I will sing you a little scene of a certain comedy which I will give them the benefit of. There are two shepherds in love, full of languor, and who in the minor key come to tell their sorrows, each one separately; then they expose to each other the cruelty of their sweethearts. Thereupon a shepherd comes in an admirable major key, and laughs at their weakness.

AD. Very well; let us hear it.

HALI. This place will do exactly for the stage, and here are two torches to light up the comedy.

AD. Place yourself close to the house, so that if you hear any noise I may order the torches to be put out.

[*Fragment of Comedy, sung and accompanied by the Musicians whom* HALI *has brought.*

SCENE I.—PHILÈNE, TIRCIS.

PHIL. If, with my sorrowful tale of inquietude,
I should now break the repose of thy solitude.
Rock, wouldst thou sorrow at all?
When thou knowest the deep grief of my secret heart,
Hard rock though thou art,
It will melt thine adamant wall.

TIR. Birds with rejoicing now wake at the dawning,
Sing of the sun in the forests deep;
I, in the morning,
Sigh still for the sorrows that will not sleep,
My dearest Philène!

PHIL. Tircis, I greet thee.
TIR. How great is my pain!
PHIL. I but repeat thee!
TIR. Deaf to my vows is th' ungrateful Climène.
PHIL. Chloris for me has no look but of scorning.

Both voices.

O law full of warning!
Love, if to give love it cannot constrain,
Why should the power to win love remain?

SCENE II.—PHILÈNE, TIRCIS, A SHEPHERD.

SHEPHERD (*sings*).

Poor lovers, no more
The cruel and proud adore.
Far love I more
Gentle souls that strike not terror,
But with soft love,
Weave ever chains of favour
To bind hearts sure.
A hundred fair ones know me,
Whom I love near,
With vows most dear.
If you a tigress show me,
I am a tiger here.

PHILÈNE *and* TIRCIS *together.*

Happy those who thus can love!]

HALI. It seems to me that I have just heard a noise inside the house, sir.

AD. Withdraw quickly, and put out the lights.

SCENE V.—DON PEDRO, ADRASTE, HALI.

PED. (*coming out of his house in his nightcap and dressing-gown, a sword under his arm*). There has been, for some time now, some singing going on outside my door; and no doubt they are not singing without a motive. I must try to discover in the dark who these people can be.

AD. Hali!

HALI. What is it?

AD. Do you hear nothing else?

HALI. No. (DON PEDRO *is behind them, listening to them.*)

AD. What! shall I never succeed, in spite of all I can do, in speaking to this lovely Greek? And will this

cursed jealous fellow, this traitor of a Sicilian, always prevent me from having access to her?

HALI. I heartily wish the devil could take him for all the trouble he gives us, the bore, the tyrant that he is! Ah! if I had him here, what pleasure I should find in avenging upon his back all the useless misery his jealousy causes us!

AD. But, all the same, we must find some means, some invention, some stratagem to take the churl in. I have gone too far to give way; and were I to make use of . . . .

HALI. Sir, I don't know how it is, but the door is open; and, if you like, I will go in softly to find out what it means. (DON PEDRO *goes back to his door.*)

AD. Yes, do so, but make no noise. I shall not be far away. Ah! Heaven grant that it may be the charming Isidore!

PED. (*giving* HALI *a box on the ear*). Who goes there?

HALI. (*doing the same to* DON PEDRO). A friend.

PED. Ho, there! Francis, Dominic, Simon, Martin, Peter, Thomas, George, Charles, Bartholomew. Come, quick! my sword, my buckler, my halberd, my pistols, my carbine, my guns! Quick! make haste! Here, kill! slay! No quarter!

SCENE VI.—ADRASTE, HALI.

AD. I hear nobody moving. Hali! Hali!

HALI. (*hidden in a corner*). Sir.

AD. Where are you hiding yourself?

HALI. Have all those fellows come out?

AD. No, there is nobody stirring.

HALI. (*coming from the place where he had been hiding*). If they come, they will catch it!

AD. What! will our trouble be for ever in vain! Will this jealous cur always baulk our designs!

HALI. No, I feel my honour engaged in the matter, and my anger is rising. It shall not be said that he triumphed over my skill. My reputation as a knave disdains all those obstacles, and I am determined to give a proof of the talents I have received from Heaven.

AD. I only wish I could succeed, by some means or other, by a letter or somebody, to let her know what are

my feelings towards her, and be told of hers in return. Afterwards we can always find a way . . . .

HALI. Leave that to me. I will try so many things, in all kind of ways, that something is sure to succeed. It is now daylight. I will go and fetch my men, and come and wait here till our jealous churl comes out.

SCENE VII.—DON PEDRO, ISIDORE.

ISI. I cannot imagine what pleasure you can find in waking me up so early in the morning. It answers very badly the idea you have taken into your head of having my portrait painted to-day. You can scarcely expect me to have a fresh complexion and bright eyes if I get up at the break of day.

PED. I have some business which compels me to go out now.

ISI. But surely your business might have well dispensed of my presence; and you might, without troubling yourself so much, leave me to the sweets of a morning slumber.

PED. Yes, but I like to have you always with me. It does no harm to take certain precautions against certain very vigilant people; and only last night some one came to sing under our windows.

ISI. It is true. The music was charming.

PED. It was all done for you?

ISI. I must believe it, since you say so.

PED. Do you know who gave you this serenade?

ISI. No, I do not; but, whoever he is, I am much obliged to him.

PED. Obliged?

ISI. Certainly, since he seeks to give me pleasure.

PED. You are pleased, then, that people love you?

ISI. Certainly; it never can be other than pleasant.

PED. And you feel kindly disposed towards all those who take that trouble?

ISI. Decidedly.

PED. This is explaining yourself very freely.

ISI. Why should I dissemble? Whatever we may show, we are always pleased to be loved. This homage paid to

our charms cannot displease us. Whatever may be said, the great ambition of women is, believe me, to inspire love. All the trouble they take is only for that; and there is no woman, however proud she may be, who does not feel pleased in her heart at the conquests she makes.

PED. But if you take such pleasure in seeing yourself loved by others, do you know that I, who love you, can scarcely take any in it?

ISI. I do not see why it should be so; for if I loved anyone, my greatest pleasure would be to see everybody love him. Is there anything which shows more the excellence of the choice we have made? And ought we not to be proud to find that those we love are thought worthy of love by all?

PED. Everyone has his way of loving; and this is not my way. I should be exceedingly glad if nobody thought you beautiful; and you will greatly oblige me by not trying to appear so in the eyes of others.

ISI. What! Does this make you jealous?

PED. Yes, jealous, and as jealous as a tiger, or, if you prefer it, as jealous as the devil himself! My love would have you wholly mine. Its sensitiveness is offended by one smile, one glance that others can obtain from you. All my care is to deprive lovers of all hope, to assure to myself the entire possession of your heart. To feel that others share it in the smallest degree gives me pain.

ISI. Well! Shall I tell you? You could not find a worse way of obtaining what you wish; the possession of a heart is much endangered when we aim at keeping it by force. For my part, I tell you frankly that if I loved a woman who was in the power of another, I should make it my study to render that man jealous, and compel him to watch day and night over her whose heart I would win. It is a wonderful way of advancing one's cause, and one soon profits by the vexation and anger which constraint and servitude create in a woman's breast.

PED. So that if anyone were to speak to you of love, he would find you ready to listen to him?

ISI. I do not say that. But, in short, women do not like to be tyrannised over; and to show them doubt and suspicion, and to keep them shut up, is to risk much.

PED. You are not very grateful for what you owe to me, and it seems to me that a slave whom I have set free in order to make her my wife . . . .

ISI. What obligation have I to you if you change my slavery for one still harder, if you do not suffer me to enjoy the least freedom, and weary me as you do with continual watching?

PED. But all this comes from an excess of love.

ISI. If this is your way of loving, I beg you to hate me.

PED. You are out of humour to-day; but I forgive what you say, because you are vexed at getting up early.

SCENE VIII.—DON PEDRO, ISIDORE, HALI (*dressed as a Turk, bowing repeatedly to* DON PEDRO).

PED. A truce to your ceremonies. What is it you want?

HALI. (*placing himself between* DON PEDRO *and* ISIDORE, *and turning towards* ISIDORE *at each word he says, and making her signs for her to understand the intention of his master*). Signor (with the signora's leave), I must tell you (with the signora's leave), that I come to you (with the signora's leave), to beg of you (with the signora's leave), to allow me (with the signora's leave) . . . .

PED. With the signora's leave, pass to this side, if you please.

(DON PEDRO *places himself between* HALI *and* ISIDORE.)

HALI. Sir, I am a virtuoso.

PED. I have nothing to give.

HALI. I do not come for that; but, as I understand music and dancing, I have taught some slaves who would be glad to meet with a master able to appreciate their talents; and as I know that you are a person of high standing in the world, I have come to ask you kindly to see them dance, and to listen to their music, so that you may buy them, if they please you, or recommend them to some of your friends, who may wish to have them.

ISI. I should like to see their performance; it will amuse us. Make them come.

HALI. "Chala bala" . . . . This is a new song, which is quite the fashion. Listen to it carefully. "Chala bala."

SCENE IX.—DON PEDRO, ISIDORE, HALI, TURKISH SLAVES.

A SLAVE (*sings*).

With glowing heart in every part
A suitor seeks his love;
But watching still, with thoughts of ill,
The jealous gods above
Deny him speech. He may not reach
His love save through his eyes.
Can deeper smart for loving heart,
Or gods or men devise?

(*To* DON PEDRO).

Chiribirida onch alla,
Star bon Turca,
Non aver danara:
Ti voler comprara?
Mi servir a ti,
Se pagar per mi,
Far bona cucina,
Mi levar matina,
Far boller caldera;
Parlara, parlara,
Ti voler comprara? *

FIRST BALLET.

The Slaves dance.

TURKISH SLAVE (*to* ISIDORE).

By a torture long and drear,
See, the lover dies;
But if she he holds so dear
Turn on him her eyes,

---

* I am a good Turk,
I have no money:
Wilt thou buy me?
I will serve thee,
If thou payest for me,
I shall do good cooking,
I shall rise early,
I shall make the pot boil;
Speak thou, speak thou,
Wilt thou buy me?

And consent in sight of men
That he be her love,
What cares he for envy then,
Or the gods above?

(*To* DON PEDRO).

Chiribirida onch alla,
Star bon Turca,
Non aver danara:
Ti voler comprara?
Mi servir a ti,
Se pagar per mi,
Far bona cucina,
Mi levar matina,
Far boller caldera;
Parlara, parlara,
Ti voler comprara?*

SECOND BALLET.

The Slaves begin their dance again.

DON PEDRO *sings.*

Know you, my fine fellows,
What means this song for you?
It means a shower of blows
For back and shoulders too.

Chiribirida onch alla,
Mi ti non comprara,
Ma ti bastonara.
Andara, andara,
O ti bastonara.†

Oh! oh! the scamps! (*to* ISIDORE) Come, let us go in again. I have changed my mind; besides, the weather is

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* See *note*, p. 269, for translation.

† I will not buy you,
But I will cudgel you.
Go away, go away,
Or I will cudgel you.

becoming cloudy. (*to* HALI, *who comes back*) Ah! scoundrel! just let me catch you at it again!

HALI. Yes, it is true, my master worships her He has no greater desire than to prove his love for her; and, if she agrees to it, to take her for his wife.

PED. Yes, yes, to be sure; I am keeping her for him.

HALI. We will have her in spite of you.

PED. How! villain . . . .

HALI. We will have her, I tell you, in spite of you.

PED. If I take . . . .

HALI. You may keep watch as much as ever you please. I have taken my oath upon it, that she shall be ours.

PED. Leave me alone; I'll catch you without running.

HALI. Not a bit of it; it is you who will be caught. She shall be ours; the thing is settled. (*alone*) Zounds! I had rather die than not succeed.

SCENE X.—ADRASTE, HALI, TWO SERVANTS.

AD. Well, Hali, how are our affairs progressing?

HALI. I have already made some small attempt, sir, but I . . . .

AD. Well, don't trouble yourself; I have accidentally found all I wanted, and I shall have the delight of seeing this beautiful girl in her own house. I went by chance to the painter Damon, who told me that he was going to-day to paint the portrait of that adorable girl. We have been intimate friends for many years, and he wishes to help me in my love; he has, therefore, sent me here with a letter of introduction, to take his place. You know that I was always fond of painting, and that contrary to the custom of France—where that a nobleman should be able to do any thing is not approved of—I can handle the brush. Thus I shall be at liberty to look at the fair one as much as I please. I have no doubt that the jealous fellow will be there, and will prevent our saying all we should like to say to each other. But I have a plan quite ready; I mean, with the help of a young slave, to rescue the lovely Greek from the hands of that churl, if only I can prevail on Isidore to consent to it.

HALI. Oh! very well, then I will do something to help you in this business. (*whispers to* ADRASTE) It shall not be said that I was useless in such an emergency. When are you going?

AD. This very moment; I have prepared everything.

HALI. I will go and get ready also.

AD. I must not lose any time. (*knocks*) Ho! there! How I long to see her!

SCENE XI.—DON PEDRO, ADRASTE, TWO SERVANTS.

PED. Whom is it you want, sir, in this house?

AD. I am looking for Signor Don Pedro.

PED. Don Pedro is here, at your service.

AD. Will you kindly take the trouble of reading this letter?

PED. (*reads*). "To take the portrait you wish to have, I send in my place this French gentleman, who, always happy to oblige people of worth, was at my wish kind enough to take upon himself this responsibility. He is, without doubt, the first man in the world for this kind of work, and I felt that I could not oblige you more than by sending him to you, as you have the desire of possessing a perfect portrait of the person you love. Be very careful to offer him no remuneration whatever; he is a man capable of being offended at your doing so, for he only works for the sake of fame and reputation." Sir, we are sincerely obliged to you for the great favour you are willing to do us.

AD. All my ambition is to render service to people of standing and merit.

PED. I will bring you the person in question.

SCENE XII.—ISIDORE, DON PEDRO, ADRASTE, TWO SERVANTS.

PED. (*to* ISIDORE). Here is a gentleman, sent to us by Damon, who is willing to take the trouble of painting your portrait. (*to* ADRASTE, *who embraces* ISIDORE *while saluting her*) I say, sir, this way of saluting is not in use in this country.

AD. It is the French fashion.

PED. The French fashion may suit French ladies; but it is a little too familiar for ours.

ISI. I accept this honour with much joy. The adventure surprises me greatly, and, to tell the truth, I did not expect to be painted by such an illustrious artist.

AD. There is no one who would not be proud to engage in such a work. I do not possess much talent, but the subject supplies only too much in itself, and anyone could do something beautiful from such a model as this.

ISI. The model is not much; but the skill of the painter will know how to disguise its defects.

AD. The painter sees no defects, and all he can wish for is, to be able faithfully to represent to the eyes of the whole world its beauty, as perfect as he sees it.

ISI. If your brush flatters as much as your language, you will paint a portrait which will not resemble me.

AD. Heaven, who made the model, denied the means of flattering the portrait.

ISI. Heaven, whatever you may say, does not . . . .

PED. Cease all this, I pray. End the compliments and begin the portrait.

AD. (*to Servants*). Bring in everything.

(*Everything necessary for painting is brought on the stage.*)

ISI. (*to* ADRASTE). Where do you wish me to sit?

AD. Here. This is the most satisfactory place; and best admits the favourable rays of light we want.

ISI. (*after having seated herself*). Am I all right so?

AD. Yes. Hold yourself up a little, please. A little more this way. The body forward in that position. Raise your head a little, so that the beauty of the neck may be seen. This part a little more uncovered. (*uncovers her throat a little*) That is better. A little more; a very little more.

PED. (*to* ISIDORE). He seems to have great difficulty in giving you a right position; can you not sit as he tells you?

ISI. These are things quite new to me; and it is this gentleman's business to place me as he likes.

AD. (*seated*). This will do splendidly; you hold yourself wonderfully well. (*making her turn a little towards*

himself) This way, if you please. (*to* DON PEDRO) All depends on the attitude we give to the persons we paint.

PED. No doubt.

AD. A little more this way. Your eyes always turned towards me, I pray; your looks fixed on mine.

ISI. I am not one of those ladies who, when they have their portraits painted, wish for portraits which are not like them, and are not satisfied unless the painter makes them more beautiful than they are. To satisfy them there should be but one portrait for all, for they all require the same things: a complexion all lilies and roses, a well-shaped nose, a small mouth, and large bright almond-shaped eyes; and, above all things, a face not larger than the hand; although it may be, in reality, a foot wide. For my part, I ask for a portrait really like me, and which will not force people to ask whose it can possibly be.

AD. It would be impossible for that question to be asked of yours; for you have features very unlike any others. What sweetness and charm they possess, and what risk one runs in painting them!

PED. The nose seems to me a little too large.

AD. I have read, I don't know exactly where, that Apelles once painted a mistress of Alexander of marvellous beauty, and that while painting her he fell so deeply in love with her, that his life was almost despaired of; so that Alexander, out of generosity, yielded to him the object of his love. (*to* DON PEDRO) The same thing that happened to Apelles might happen to me here; but, perhaps, you would not do what Alexander did? (DON PEDRO *makes a significant grimace.*)

ISI. (*to* DON PEDRO). All this shows the nation, and French gentlemen always find an opportunity of paying compliments.

AD. One can hardly be deceived in these kinds of things, and you have too clear a judgment not to discern from what all I say, proceeds. Yes, though Alexander were here, and he were your lover, I could not forbear telling you that I never saw anything so beautiful as what I now behold, and that . . . .

PED. It seems to me, sir, that you should not speak so much, it takes your attention away from your work.

AD. Oh dear, no! I am in the habit of talking when I paint; it is important in such cases to have a little conversation to clear the spirits, and to bring into the face of those we paint all the brightness which is necessary.

SCENE XIII.—HALI (*dressed as a Spaniard*), DON PEDRO, ADRASTE, ISIDORE.

PED. What does this man want? And who is it lets people come up without telling us?

HALI. (*to* DON PEDRO). I come here without ceremony; but such a liberty is allowed between gentlemen. Am I known to you, sir?

PED. No, sir!

HALI. I am Don Gilles d'Avalos; and the history of Spain must have told you of my merit.

PED. Is there anything in which I can serve you?

HALI. Yes, sir, I want your advice on an affair of honour. I know that on such matters it would be difficult to meet with a more accomplished gentleman than you are. But, I pray you, let us step aside a little.

PED. This is far enough.

AD. (*to* DON PEDRO, *who sees him on his knee whispering to* ISIDORE). I was looking at the colour of her eyes.

HALI. (*drawing* DON PEDRO *away from* ADRASTE *and* ISIDORE). Sir, I have received a slap on the face. You know what a slap on the face means, when it is given, the hand wide open, full on the middle of the cheek. I have that slap on the face much at heart; and I am uncertain whether, to avenge this insult, I ought to fight my adversary or have him assassinated.

PED. Assassinated; that is the safest and shortest way. Who is your enemy?

HALI. Let us speak low, if you please. (HALI *holds* DON PEDRO *while speaking to him, so as to prevent him from seeing* ADRASTE *and* ISIDORE.)

AD. (*at* ISIDORE'S *feet, whilst* HALI *and* DON PEDRO *are speaking to each other*). Yes, dear Isidore, my eyes have told it you these last two months, and you have understood them aright. I love you above everything that man can love, and I have no other thought, no other aim, no other passion, but to be yours all my life.

ISI. I do not know whether you speak the truth; but you almost persuade me.

AD. But can I persuade you so far as to inspire you with ever so little love for me?

ISI. I only fear I have too much.

AD. Will you love me enough, dear Isidore, to consent to what I have asked of you?

ISI. I cannot tell you yet.

AD. What are you waiting for?

ISI. To make up my mind.

AD. Ah! when one really loves, decisions are soon taken.

ISI. Very well, then, I consent to it.

AD. But do you consent that it should be this very moment?

ISI. When we are once resolved upon doing a thing, we do not hesitate as to the time.

PED. (*to* HALI). That is my opinion, and I am your obedient servant.

HALI. Sir, if ever you receive a blow, I also am a man who can help you, and I will return the service you have rendered me.

PED. You will excuse my not taking you to the door; but between gentlemen such freedom is allowed.

AD. (*to* ISIDORE). No, there is nothing which can efface from my heart the tender proofs. (*to* DON PEDRO, *who sees him whispering to* ISIDORE) I was looking at this little dimple she has on her chin; I thought at first that it was a mole. But it is enough for to-day; we will finish another time. (*to* DON PEDRO, *who wants to look at the portrait*) No, do not look at it yet. Have all this put away carefully, I pray. (*to* ISIDORE) And you, I beseech you, do not give way; but try to keep up your spirits for the accomplishment of the work we have to do.

ISI. I will keep up my spirits to the extent necessary for the purpose.

SCENE XIV.—DON PEDRO, ISIDORE.

ISI. What do you think of him? He seems to me the most polite gentleman in the world; and one must acknow-

ledge that the French have in them a polite and gallant manner which other nations have not.

PED. Yes; but what there is bad about them is, that they become too free, and are always ready to make love to the first person they meet.

ISI. Because they know that it is pleasant to ladies.

PED. Yes; but if it is pleasant to ladies, it is not pleasant to gentlemen; and one does not care to see them boldly court one's mistress or wife before one's very eyes.

ISI. They only do it in fun.

SCENE XV.—ZAÏDE, DON PEDRO, ISIDORE.

ZAI. Ah! good sir, save me, I beseech you, from the hands of a furious husband who is pursuing me. His jealousy is beyond everything, and greater than you could ever imagine. He carries it so far as to oblige me to be always veiled; and because he found me with my face a little uncovered, he snatched up a sword, and reduced me to the necessity of coming here to throw myself upon your mercy. But I see him coming. Save me from his fury!

PED. (*to* ZAÏDE, *pointing to* ISIDORE). Go in here with her and fear nothing.

SCENE XVI.—ADRASTE, DON PEDRO.

PED. What, sir, is it you? So much jealousy in a Frenchman? I thought we were the only men subject to that passion?

AD. The French always excel in what they do; and when we take it into our head to be jealous, we are twenty times more so even than a Sicilian. The infamous creature thinks to have found a safe refuge in your house; but you are too considerate to blame my resentment. Leave me, I beg you, to punish her as she deserves.

PED. Ah, pray, do not. The offence is too small for such wrath.

AD. The greatness of an offence is according to the importance we attach to it. Hers consists in disobeying

the order given; and on such matters, what in itself is but a trifle, becomes criminal because it has been forbidden.

PED. From what she said, it was done unintentionally, and I pray you to be reconciled.

AD. What! do you take her part? You, who are so particular in such things?

PED. Yes, I take her part; and if you would oblige me, you will forget your anger and be reconciled to each other. It is a favour I ask of you; and I shall receive it as a mark of the friendship which I hope to see existing between us.

AD. On such conditions, I can refuse you nothing. I will do as you wish.

SCENE XVII.—ZAÏDE, DON PEDRO, ADRASTE (*hiding*).

PED. (*to* ZAÏDE). Now, come. Only follow me; I have made your peace with your husband. You could not have done better than have come to me.

ZAI. I am more obliged to you than I can tell; but I must go and take my veil, for I shall be careful not to show myself to him without it.

SCENE XVIII.—DON PEDRO, ADRASTE.

PED. She is coming, and I assure you that she seemed delighted that I had been able to make it all right.

SCENE XIX.—ISIDORE (*with* ZAÏDE'S *veil*), ADRASTE, DON PEDRO.

PED. (*to* ADRASTE). Since you were willing to forgive her, allow me to join your hands together here, and to beseech you to live henceforth in perfect harmony for my sake.

AD. Yes, I promise you that for your sake I will go and live with her in perfect peace.

PED. You will give me great pleasure, and I will not forget it.

AD. I give you my word, Don Pedro, that out of consideration for you I will treat her in the very best manner I can.

PED. It is a great favour you grant me. (*alone*) It is a good thing to be peace-maker, and to arrange matters amicably. Here, Isidore, come to me.

SCENE XX.—ZAÏDE, DON PEDRO.

PED. How! what does this mean?

ZAI. (*without her veil*). What this means? that a jealous man is a monster hated by everybody; that there is no one who would not be delighted to play him some trick for the mere pleasure of doing it; that locks and bars cannot hold people; that it is the heart you must win through kindness and affection; and lastly, that Isidore is now in the hands of the man she loves, for you have played the part of a dupe.

PED. And shall Don Pedro suffer this mortal insult! No, no, I have too much courage for that; I will ask the help of justice to punish the treacherous villain. We have a senator living here. Ho!

SCENE XXI.—A SENATOR, DON PEDRO.

SEN. Your servant, Don Pedro. At what a lucky moment you come!

PED. I come to complain to you of an affront . . . .

SEN. I have arranged the finest masquerade imaginable.

PED. A scoundrel of a Frenchman has played me such a trick.

SEN. You never saw in your life anything so beautiful.

PED. He has carried off a girl that I had set free.

SEN. They are people dressed like Moors, and dance beautifully.

PED. You see whether this is an insult to be borne with.

SEN. The dresses are splendid, and are all made on purpose.

PED. I ask for justice against such an action.

SEN. You must see it. It is going to be rehearsed again to amuse the people.

PED. What are you talking about?
SEN. I am speaking of my masquerade.
PED. And I of my affair.
SEN. I will hear to-day of no other affair than pleasure. Come on, gentlemen, come forward and let us see if it will go right.
PED. Plague take the fool with his masquerade!
SEN. The deuce take the bore with his affair!

SCENE XXII.—THE SENATOR, DANCERS.

BALLET.

(*Several Dancers, dressed as Moors, dance before the* SENATOR, *and end the comedy.*)

TARTUFFE;

OR, THE IMPOSTOR.

(TARTUFFE; OU, L'IMPOSTEUR.

'Tartuffe' is one of the plays of Molière which has given rise to the greatest controversy. Judged as a work of art, it has always been admired. Considered in a social or religious point of view, it has been the object of the bitterest attacks. It was finished in 1664, and was acted once in Paris in 1667. Molière was then forbidden to give it to the public, and, in spite of his pressing solicitations to the king, it never was acted again before the 5th of February, 1669. Then it met with the greatest success, and had a run of forty-four nights, a most unusual number in those days.

Molière acted the part of Orgon.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

ORGON, *husband to* ELMIRE.

DAMIS, *his son.*

VALÈRE, *betrothed to* MARIANNE.

CLÉANTE, *brother-in-law to* ORGON.

TARTUFFE.

MR. LOYAL, *bailiff.*

A Police Officer.

ELMIRE, *wife to* ORGON.

MADAME PERNELLE, *mother to* ORGON.

MARIANNE, ORGON'S *daughter, betrothed to* VALÈRE.

DORINE, *maid to* MARIANNE.

FLIPOTE, *servant to* MME. PERNELLE.

The scene is in Paris, in the house of ORGON.

TARTUFFE;

OR, THE IMPOSTOR.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—MADAME PERNELLE, ELMIRE, MARIANNE, DAMIS, DORINE, FLIPOTE.

PER. Come along, Flipote, come along, let me get away from them all.

EL. You go so fast that one can hardly keep up with you.

PER. Never mind, daughter, never mind; come no farther; I can well dispense with these ceremonies.

EL. We acquit ourselves of our duty towards you. But, mother, may I ask why you are in such a hurry to leave us?

PER. For the simple reason that I cannot bear to see what goes on in your house, and that no effort is made to comply with my wishes. Yes, I leave your house very ill edified. Things are done against all my admonitions; there is no respect paid to anything; everyone speaks out as he likes, and it is exactly like the court of King Petaud.*

DOR. If . . . .

PER. You, a servant, are a great deal too strong in the

* King Petaud, the name which the corporation of beggars used to give in old times to their chief. The word comes, perhaps, from the Latin *peto*, I ask. This is the usual explanation of the word, but one given by Littré in his Dictionary seems more probable.

jaw, most rude, and must have your say about everything.

DA. But . . . .

PER. You are, in good round English, a fool my child. I, your grandmother, tell you so; and I always forewarned your father that you would turn out a worthless fellow, and would never bring him anything but vexation.

MAR. I think . . . .

PER. And you, his sister, are all demureness, and look as if butter would not melt in your mouth. But it is truly said that still waters run deep, and on the sly you lead a life which I thoroughly dislike.

EL. But, mother . . . .

PER. I should be sorry to vex you, my daughter, but your conduct is altogether unbecoming; you ought to set them a good example, and their late mother did much better. You spend money too freely; and I am shocked to see you go about dressed like a princess. She who wishes to please her husband only, has no need of such finery.

CLE. But, madam, after all . . . .

PER. As for you, her brother, I esteem you greatly, I love and respect you, sir; but all the same if I were in my son's her husband's place, I would beg of you most earnestly never to enter the house. You always advocate rules of life that honest folks ought not to follow.—I am a little outspoken, but such is my disposition, and I never mince matters when I have something on my mind.

DOR. Your Tartuffe is very fortunate, no doubt, in . . . .

PER. He is a very worthy man, to whom you would do well to listen, and I can't bear, without getting into a passion, to see him molested by a scapegrace like you.

DA. What! can I allow a straight-laced bigot to assume a tyrannical authority in this house; and that we should never think of any pleasure unless we are assured of that fine gentleman's consent.

DOR. According to him and his maxims, we can do nothing without committing a sin; for the zealous critic superintends everything.

PER. And whatever he superintends is well superin-

tended. It is the way to Heaven he wants to show you, and my son should make you all love him.

DA. No, mother, there is no father nor anything in the world which can induce me to wish him well, and I should be false to my own heart if I spoke otherwise. Everything he does excites my wrath, and I foresee that some day or other something will happen, and that I shall be forced to come to an open quarrel with the sneaking scoundrel.

DOR. Indeed it is most scandalous to see a stranger come and make himself at home here; most scandalous that a beggar who had no shoes to his feet when he first came, and whose coat was not worth three halfpence, should so far forget himself as to interfere with everything and play the master!

PER. Ah! mercy on us! It would be much better if everything were managed according to his pious directions.

DOR. Yes, he is a saint in your opinion; but depend upon it, he is really nothing but a downright hypocrite.

PER. What backbiting!

DOR. I should trust neither him nor his Laurent without good security, I can tell you.

PER. I don't know what the servant may really be; but I'll answer for the master being a holy man. You hate him and reject him because he tells you of your faults. It is against sin that he is incensed, and there is nothing he has so much at heart as the interest of Heaven.

DOR. Has he? Why, then, and particularly of late, is he angry when anyone comes near us? In what does a polite visit offend Heaven, that he should make a disturbance enough to drive us mad? Shall I tell you here privately what I think? (*pointing to* ELMIRE) I really believe that he is, in good faith, ... jealous of madam!

PER. Hold your tongue, and mind what you are saying. He is not the only one who blames these visits. All the confusion which accompanies the people you receive, those carriages always waiting at the gate, the noisy crowd of lackeys, disturb the whole neighbourhood. I am most willing to believe that there is really no harm done; but,

in short, it gives people occasion to talk, and that is not right.

CLE. Ah! madam, would you hinder people from talking? It would be a sad thing if in this world we had to give up our best friends because of some stupid story in which we may play a part. But even if we could bring ourselves to do such a thing, do you think it would force people to be silent? There is no safeguard against calumny. Let us, therefore, not mind all that foolish gossip, but only endeavour to lead a virtuous life, and leave full licence to the scandal-mongers.

DOR. Are not Daphné, our neighbour, and her small husband, those who have been speaking evil of us? The people whose conduct offers the greatest hold to ridicule are always the first to speak unkindly of others. They never fail to catch at the least sign of a mutual esteem to spread far and wide the news with glee, and to give it the meaning they wish people to credit. By giving to the actions of others the colour that belongs to their own, they think to justify their conduct to the world; and under the delusive hope of some resemblance, to give their own intrigues a look of innocence, or cause to fall elsewhere a part of the blame of which they have too heavy a share.

PER. All these reasonings are beside the mark. Everybody, for instance, knows that Orante leads an exemplary life, that her thoughts are of Heaven only; now, I have heard say that she has not a very high opinion of the people who visit here.

DOR. The example is well chosen, and the lady is really too good! It is true she leads an austere life, but age has brought that ardent zeal, and we know that she is a prude, because she could hardly be anything else. As long as it was in her power to make conquests, she profited largely by all her advantages; but now, aware that her eyes have lost their lustre, she, forsooth, renounces the world which forsakes her, and under the specious veil of great discretion hides the decay of her worn-out charms. This is the way with coquettes now-a-days; it is misery to them to be deserted by their lovers, and when thus left to themselves they see no other loophole of escape from

gloomy despair than prudishness. The worthy women censure everything with severity, and forgive nothing; they loudly blame everybody's way of living, not out of motives of charity, but because, through envy, they cannot bear to see another enjoy the pleasures of which age deprives them.*

PER. (*to* ELMIRE). This, daughter, is the idle nonsense that pleases you. I am of necessity forced to be silent in your house, for this lady has the privilege of talking all day long; yet I will not be beaten, and you shall hear me in my turn. I tell you that my son never acted more wisely than when he took this holy man into his family; that Heaven, in its mercy, has sent him in time to reclaim your minds from error. It is for your salvation that he is here, and he reproves nothing but what deserves reproof. These visits, these balls, and this idle talk are all begotten of the evil one. You never hear there any pious conversation, but only tittle-tattle and nonsensical foolish things. Often, also, our neighbours come in for a share, and there is evil-speaking about everybody. In short, sensible people lose their senses in the confusion of such gatherings. A thousand idle stories are started in a moment, and it was well said the other day by a good doctor, that it is a perfect Babel; for everyone there jabbers till he can jabber no more. And in order to explain how this remark came . . . . (*pointing to* CLÉANTE) There, do you see that gentleman giggling already! Go and find the fools who give you cause to laugh; and without . . . . (*to* ELMIRE) Farewell to you, daughter, I won't speak a word more. Know that I don't think half as much of your home as I once did, and that it will be many a long day before you catch me in here again. (*giving a box on the ear to* FLIPOTE) Come along; what are you dreaming and gaping about there? Holy Virgin! I'll warm your ears for you. Come along, you hussy; come along, I say.

* An allusion to the Duchess of Nouailles, who owed her elevation to a life of intrigue during the wars of the Fronde. She had a grating put at the entrance of the apartment of the maids of honour, to prevent the king from visiting Mademoiselle de Lamothe Hondancourt.—*See* Louandre.

Scene II.—Cléante, Dorine.

Cle. No, I won't follow her, for fear she should abuse me again. How the old woman . . . .

Dor. It is a pity she does not hear you call her so. She would soon tell you her mind about what she thinks of you, and that she is not of an age to call forth such a remark from you.

Cle. What a passion she got in about nothing, and how mad she is after her Tartuffe!

Dor. Yes, indeed. But all this is nothing compared to the infatuation of her son; if you could but see him, you would soon say that it was worse and worse! Our civil troubles * had given Orgon the reputation of a man of sense, and he showed courage while serving his king; but since he is thus besotted with his Tartuffe, he has almost become silly. He calls him "brother," and in his inmost soul loves him a hundred times more than either mother, son, daughter, or wife. He makes him the only confidant of all his secrets, and the prudent adviser of all his actions. He caresses him, kisses him, and no one could show a stronger affection for any lady-love. When at table he insists upon his occupying the place of honour, and is quite delighted to see him gulp down as much as half-a-dozen people. The very best cuts are for him, and if the hiccup disturbs him, our master gives him a "God bless you." In a word, he dotes upon him, he is everything to him—his hero. He admires all his actions, quotes him on all occasions, looks upon every trivial thing he does as a wonder, and every word he says as the sayings of an oracle. Tartuffe, who understands his man, and means to make his profit by him, knows how to impose on him in a hundred different

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* In order to succeed in having 'Tartuffe' brought on the stage, Molière was forced to have recourse to many expedients. The first thing was to put the king on his side, and in the fifth act the king is really the *Deus ex machina* of the play. This allusion to the civil troubles of the Fronde was also meant to please him; for the king could never forgive those who had taken part with the Coadjutor. If "the civil troubles had given Orgon the reputation of a man of sense," it was understood that he had fought against the Coadjutor for his king, who ultimately is made to reward him for it. (*See* Act V.)

ways; by his cant he extorts money from him, and, on the strength of his hypocritical bigotry, takes upon himself to reprove the whole family. Even that jackanapes of a boy who acts as a servant to him, dares to find fault with us; he comes and sermonises us with fierce, indignant looks, and throws away our ribbons, rouge, and patches. The wretch the other day tore a handkerchief to pieces, because he had found it folded in a 'Flower of the Saints,'* saying that we were committing the abominable sin of mixing holiness with the adornments of hell.

SCENE III.—ELMIRE, MARIANNE, DAMIS, CLÉANTE, DORINE.

EL. (*to* CLÉANTE). You are very fortunate not to have accompanied her to the door to have heard the things she said to us. But I just caught sight of my husband; and as he did not see me, I must go and wait upstairs for his coming, and only say good morning to him.

CLE. I will stop here some time.

SCENE IV.—CLÉANTE, DAMIS, DORINE.

DA. Speak to him a little about my sister's marriage I have an idea that Tartuffe is opposed to it, and that it is he who puts my father up to all those trying evasions. You know how I am interested in the matter . . . . If love unites my sister and Valère, his sister also is very dear to me; and if it must . . . .

DOR. Here he is.

SCENE V.—ORGON, CLÉANTE, DORINE.

ORG. Ah! good morning, brother.

CLE. I was just going away, but I am glad to see you back. The fields are not very green just now, are they?

ORG. Dorine . . . . (*to* CLÉANTE) Brother, pray excuse me; you will kindly allow me to allay my anxiety by asking news of the family. (*to* DORINE) Has everything

* A book written by a celebrated Spanish Jesuit, and translated into French.

gone on well these last two days? What has happened? How is everybody?

DOR. The day before yesterday our mistress was very feverish from morning to night, and suffered from a most extraordinary headache.

ORG. And Tartuffe?

DOR. Tartuffe! He is wonderfully well, stout and fat, with blooming cheeks and ruddy lips.

ORG. Poor man!

DOR. In the evening she felt very faint, and the pain in her head was so great that she could not touch anything at supper.

ORG. And Tartuffe?

DOR. He ate his supper by himself before her; and very devoutly devoured a brace of partridges and half a leg of mutton hashed!

ORG. Poor man!

DOR. She spent the whole of the night without getting one wink of sleep; she was very feverish, and we had to sit up with her until the morning.

ORG. And Tartuffe?

DOR. Overcome by a pleasant sleepiness he passed from the table to his room, and got at once into his warmed bed, where he slept comfortably till the next morning.

ORG. Poor man!

DOR. At last yielding to our persuasions, she consented to be bled, and immediately felt relieved.

ORG. And Tartuffe?

DOR. He took heart right valiantly, and fortifying his soul against all evils, to make up for the blood which our lady had lost, drank at breakfast four large bumpers of wine.

ORG. Poor man!

DOR. Now at last, they are both well; and I will go and tell our lady how glad you are to hear of her recovery.

SCENE VI.—ORGON, CLÉANTE.

CLE. She is laughing at you to your face, brother; and although I am far from wishing to vex you, I must say that she is right. Was ever such a whim heard of before?

Is it possible that you should be so infatuated with a man as to forget everything for him? And, after having saved him from want, that you should come to . . . .

ORG. Not a word more, brother, for you do not know the man you are speaking of.

CLE. I do not know him, if you like, but in order to see what kind of man he is . . . .

ORG. Brother, you would be delighted with him if you knew him, and you would never get over your wonder. He is a man who . . . . ah! a man . . . . in short, a man. Whoever carefully follows his precepts lives in most profound peace, and all the rest of the world is but dross to him. Yes, I am quite another man since I became acquainted with him. He teaches me to have no affection for anybody, he detaches my heart from all the ties of this world; and I should see my brother, children, mother, and wife die, without caring about it.

CLE. Humane feelings these, brother!

ORG. Ah! if you had only seen him when I first met him, you would feel for him the same love that I have. He came every day to church, and with gentle looks knelt down straight before me on both his knees. He attracted the attention of the whole congregation by the ardour with which, wrapped in saintly ecstasy, he sent up his prayer to Heaven. He sighed deeply, and every moment humbly kissed the ground. When I went out, he would steal quickly before me to offer me holy water at the door. Having heard through his servant, who imitates him in everything, of his poverty and who he is, I made him small presents, but he, with the greatest modesty, always returned me part of it: "It is too much," he would say, "too much by half, I do not deserve your pity;" and when I refused to take it back again, he went, before my eyes, to distribute it to the poor. At last Heaven moved me to take him into my house, and since then everything has been prospering here. I see that he reproves everything, and, with regard to my wife, takes extreme care of my honour. He warns me of the people who cast loving eyes upon her, and is a dozen times more jealous of her than I am. You would never believe how far he carries his pious zeal. He accuses himself of sin for the

slightest thing imaginable; a mere trifle is enough to shock him; so much so, that the other day he blamed himself for having caught a flea while at his prayers, and for having killed it with too much wrath.

CLE. You are crazy, brother, I believe! Are you laughing at me with such stuff? What is it you mean? All this foolery . . . .

ORG. Brother, what you say savours of freethinking; you are somewhat tainted with it; and, as I have told you again and again, you will draw some heavy judgment upon your head.

CLE. Tut! This is the usual way of talking with such as you. They want everybody to be as blind as they are; to see clearly is to be a freethinker; and not to worship empty show is to act from a want of faith and of respect for holy things. Believe me, all your denunciations do not frighten me; I know what I say, and God sees my heart. I am no dupe of all your formalists. Devotion, like courage, has its pretenders; and in the same way that the truly brave are not those who make the most noise where honour leads them, so the real and truly pious men whose example we ought to follow, are not those who affect such grimaces. What! will you make no distinction between hypocrisy and true religion? Will you call them both by the same name, and render the same homage to the mask as to the face? Will you put on the same level falsehood and sincerity, and confound appearance with reality? Will you esteem the shadow as much as the substance, and false coin as much as good? Men are really strange beings; they never keep to simple nature. The bounds of reason seem too narrow for them, and in every character they over-act their parts; they often spoil even the noblest thing by exaggeration. This to yourself, by the way, brother.

ORG. Yes, you are doubtless a doctor revered by all; all the knowledge of the world has taken its abode in you; you are the only wise and enlightened man,—the oracle, the Cato of the present age; and all men compared to you are fools.

CLE. No, I am not a revered doctor, brother; no, all the knowledge of this world has not found its abode in

me. I have merely the science of discerning truth from falsehood. And as I know nothing in the world so noble and so beautiful as the holy fervour of genuine piety, so there is nothing, I think, so odious as the whitewashed outside of a specious zeal; as those downright impostors, those hireling-bigots* whose sacrilegious and deceitful grimaces impose on others with impunity, and who trifle as they like with all that mankind holds sacred; those men who, wholly given to mercenary ends, trade upon godliness, and would purchase honour and reputation at the cost of hypocritical looks and affected groans; who, seized with strange ardour, make use of the next world to secure their fortune in this; who, with great affectation and many prayers, daily preach solitude and retirement while they themselves live at Court; who know how to reconcile their zeal with their vices; who are passionate, revengeful, faithless, full of deceit, and who, to work the destruction of a fellow-man, insolently cover their fierce resentment with the cause of Heaven. They are so much the more dangerous in that they, in their bitter wrath, use against us those weapons which men revere; and their anger, which everybody lauds, assassinates us with a consecrated weapon. There are too many such mean hypocrites in the world; but from them the truly pious are easy to distinguish. Our age offers us abundant and glorious examples, my brother. Look at Ariston, look at Périande, Oronte, Alcidamus, Polydore, and Clitandre. No one will refuse them this title. They are no pretenders to virtue. You never see in them this unbearable ostentation, and their piety is human and tractable. They never censure the doings of others; they think there is too much pride in such censure; and leaving lofty words to others, they only reprove our actions by their own virtue. They do not trust to the appearance of evil, and are more inclined to judge kindly of others. We find no cabals, no intrigues

* *Dévots de place*, a word coined by Molière. Compare *voitures de place*—cabs found at cabstands. In the seventeenth century servants were still in the habit of going in the public squares, to wait for some one to engage their services. We still say *valet de place* for a *town-guide*. The *dévot de place* would come forward in the same way, and make a show of his advantages or doings.

among them; all their anxiety is to live a holy life. They never persecute the sinner, but they hate the sin. They do not care to display for the interest of Heaven a more ardent zeal than Heaven itself displays. These are people after my own heart; it is thus we should live; this is the pattern for us to follow. Tartuffe is not of this stamp, I know. You speak with the best intention of his goodness, but I fear you are dazzled by false appearances.

ORG. Well, my dear brother, have you done?

CLE. Yes.

ORG. (*going*). I am your servant.

CLE. Pray, one word more. Let us drop this discussion. You know that Valère has your promise to be your son-in-law?

ORG. Yes.

CLE. And that you had fixed a day for the wedding?

ORG. True.

CLE. Why, then, do you put off the ceremony?

ORG. I don't know.

CLE. Have you any other project in your mind?

ORG. Perhaps.

CLE. Would you break your word?

ORG. I don't say that.

CLE. You have no reason, I think, to prevent you from fulfilling your promise?

ORG. That depends.

CLE. Valère has asked me to speak to you on the subject.

ORG. Heaven be praised for that!

CLE. But what answer shall I give him?

ORG. Any answer you please.

CLE. Still, we ought to know your intentions. What are they?

ORG. To do Heaven's will.

CLE. Let us speak reasonably. You gave your word to Valère; will you or will you not keep it?

ORG. Good-bye. (*Exit.*)

CLE. (*alone*). I greatly fear some misfortune for his love. I must go and tell him of all that is going on.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—ORGON, MARIANNE.

ORG. Marianne!

MAR. Father!

ORG. Come here; I have something to say to you privately.

MAR. (*to* ORGON, *who peers into a little side-room*). What are you looking for?

ORG. I want to see if there is anyone there who could overhear us: this is a most likely place for such a purpose. Now we are all right. Marianne, I have always found you of a sweet disposition, and you have always been very dear to me.

MAR. I thank you very much for this fatherly love.

ORG. Rightly spoken, my daughter; and, to deserve it, you should think of nothing but of pleasing me.

MAR. I have no dearer wish at heart.

ORG. Very well; then tell me, what do you say of our guest, Tartuffe?

MAR. Who, I?

ORG. You. Be careful how you answer.

MAR. Alas! I will say anything you please of him.

SCENE II.—ORGON, MARIANNE, DORINE (*coming in softly, and standing behind* ORGON *without being noticed by him*).

ORG. You speak wisely. Then say, daughter, that he possesses the greatest merit; that he has touched your heart; and that it would be happiness to you to see him, with my approbation, become your husband.

MAR. (*drawing back with surprise*). Eh!

ORG. What is the matter?

MAR. What did you say?

ORG. What?

MAR. Did I make a mistake?

ORG. Make a mistake?

MAR. Who is it, father, that you would have me say has touched my heart, and whom, with your approbation, it would be happiness to have for a husband?

ORG. Tartuffe.

MAR. But I feel nothing of the kind, I assure you, father. Why would you have me tell such a falsehood?

ORG. But I wish it to be the truth; and it is sufficient for you that I have decided it should be so.

MAR. What! you wish me, father . . . .

ORG. Yes, daughter, I intend to unite Tartuffe to my family by marrying him to you. I am resolved that he shall be your husband; and as I can . . . . (*seeing* DORINE) What are you doing here? Your curiosity must be very strong, young damsel, for you to come and listen to us after that fashion.

DOR. Really, sir, I don't know whether the report arose from conjecture or by chance; but I have just been told of this match, and I treated the whole story as a sorry joke.

ORG. Why! Is the thing so incredible?

DOR. So incredible, sir, that I do not believe it, even when I hear you speak of it.

ORG. I shall find the means of making you believe it, you may be sure.

DOR. Pooh! pooh! you are telling us a fine story indeed!

ORG. I am telling you what will very soon prove true.

DOR. Nonsense!

ORG. I assure you, daughter, that I am not jesting.

DOR. Ah! ah! Don't you go and believe your father, he is only laughing.

ORG. I tell you . . . .

DOR. It'll all be lost time; nobody will believe you.

ORG. My anger at last . . . .

DOR. Very well! very well! We believe you, and so much the worse for you. What! is it possible, sir, that with your wise looks, and that large beard in the very midst of your face, you should be foolish enough to wish . . . .

ORG. Now, listen. You have of late taken certain liberties here which do not please me at all. Do you hear?

DOR. Let us speak calmly, sir, I beseech you. Are you laughing at us with this scheme? Your daughter will

never do for a bigot; he has something else to think about. And then, what does such an alliance bring to you? Why should you, with all your wealth, go and choose a beggar for your son-in-law . . . .

ORG. Hold your tongue. If he has no money, remember that that is the very reason why we should esteem him. His poverty is a noble poverty, and one which ought to place him above all greatness, for he lost his fortune through the little care he had for the things of this world, and through his anxiety for the next. However, with my help, he will have the means of settling his affairs and of recovering his own. For, poor as he is, he is a gentleman, and the estate which he has a right to is considerable.

DOR. Yes; at least he says so. But this vanity, sir, does not agree well with piety. Whoever gives himself to the privations of a holy life should not make such a boast of title and lineage; the humble ways of piety suffer from the publicity of such ambition. Why such pride? . . . . But what I say vexes you. Let us leave his nobility aside and speak of his person. Would you really, without sorrow, give a girl like your daughter to a man of his stamp? And ought you not to think a little of propriety, and prevent the consequences of such a union? You ought to know that you endanger a woman's virtue when you marry her against her will or taste. Her living virtuously in the bonds of matrimony depends much on the husband who is given to her; and those who are everywhere pointed at, have often made their wives what they are. It is, in fact, very difficult to remain faithful to certain husbands of a certain kind; and whoever gives his daughter to a man she hates is responsible to Heaven for all the sins she commits. Think to what danger you are exposed by such a scheme.

ORG. I see that I shall have to learn from her what to do!

DOR. It would be all the better for you if you followed my advice.

ORG. Daughter, let us no longer waste our time with such nonsense; I am your father, and I know what you want. I had promised you to Valère; but, from what I

am told, not only is he rather given to gambling, but I also suspect him of being a freethinker. I never see him come to church.

DOR. Would you have him run there at your fixed hours, like those who go there only to be seen?

ORG. I don't ask your opinion in the matter.—In short, Tartuffe is on the best terms with Heaven, and this is a treasure to which nothing else can be compared. You will find all your wishes satisfied by such a union: it will prove a continual source of delight and pleasure. You will live together in your faithful love like two young children—like two turtle-doves. Never will any unhappy discussion arise between you, and you will make anything you like of him.

DOR. She will make nought but a fool of him, I know.

ORG. Gracious me, what language!

DOR. I tell you that he has the look of one, and that his destiny will overrule, sir, all the virtue your daughter may have.

ORG. Leave off interrupting me. Mind you keep silent, and not poke your word in, where you have no business.

DOR. (*she interrupts him each time he turns round to speak to his daughter*). What I say is only for your own good, sir.

ORG. You take too much upon you. Be quiet, if you please.

DOR. If I did not love you . . . .

ORG. I don't wish to be loved.

DOR. And I shall love you, in spite of yourself, sir.

ORG. How now?

DOR. I have your honour at heart, and I cannot bear to see you bring a thousand ill-natured remarks upon yourself.

ORG. Will you be silent?

DOR. It is a shame to allow you to think of such a marriage.

ORG. Will you hold your peace, you serpent, whose insolence . . . .

DOR. What! you're a pious man, and you give way to anger?

ORG. Yes; my patience must give way before all this. I insist upon you holding your tongue.

DOR. Very well; but, although I don't speak, I think none the less.

ORG. Think, if you like; but be careful to tell me nothing of your thoughts, or take care . . . . (*turning to his daughter*) Like a prudent man, I have carefully weighed everything.

DOR. (*aside*). It makes me furious not to be able to speak.

ORG. Although he is no dandy, Tartuffe's face is such . . . .

DOR. Yes, 'tis a fine phiz!

ORG. That even if you had no sympathy whatever with all his other gifts . . . .

DOR. Yes, she is well provided for! (ORGON *turns round to face* DORINE, *and with crossed arms listens to her.*) If I were in her place, depend upon it no man should marry me against my will without paying for it. I would soon show him, after our wedding-day, that a woman can always revenge herself.

ORG. So, you will pay no heed to what I say?

DOR. What do you complain of? I am not speaking to you.

ORG. What is it you are doing, then?

DOR. I am speaking to myself; that's all.

ORG. (*aside*). To punish her insolence, I shall have to make her feel the weight of my hand. (*He gets ready to give a box on the ear to* DORINE, *and at each word he says to his daughter he turns round to look at* DORINE, *who stands bolt upright, without speaking.*) Daughter, you cannot but approve the determination I have come to . . . . and believe that the husband . . . . I have chosen for you . . . . (*to* DORINE) Why don't you speak to yourself?

DOR. I have nothing to say to myself.

ORG. Only try one little word more.

DOR. I don't choose to.

ORG. I was waiting for you.

DOR. No such fool, I!

ORG. In short, daughter, you must obey, and show for my choice that deference . . . .

DOR. (*running away*). I'd take good care not to marry such a man.

ORG. (*who has missed giving a box on the ear to* DORINE). You have there with you, daughter, a pestilent hussy, with whom I can live no longer without sin. I feel unable to go on now. Her insolent remarks have put me in such a passion that I must go out awhile to recover myself. (*Exit.*)

SCENE III.—MARIANNE, DORINE.

DOR. Tell me, have you lost all power of speech? and must I act for you in this? What! you allow a mad proposal to be made to you, without saying a single word against it!

MAR. What will you have me do against the absolute will of my father?

DOR. Anything to turn off such a threatened danger.

MAR. But what?

DOR. Why, tell him that no one loves at the bidding of another; that you marry for yourself, and not for him; that, as this business concerns you only, it is you, not him, that the husband should please; and that, since his Tartuffe seems so charming in his eyes, he may marry him himself as much as he likes.

MAR. A father has such authority over us that I acknowledge I had not the courage to answer him.

DOR. But, let us see. Valère has proposed to you; now, tell me, do you love him or do you not?

MAR. Ah! how unjust you are towards my love, Dorine. Why should you ask me such a thing? Have I not opened my heart to you? Do you not know how greatly I love him?

DOR. How am I to know whether you spoke from your heart, and whether it is perfectly true that you love him?

MAR. You do me a great wrong to doubt it, Dorine; and you know very well my true feelings in the matter.

DOR. So that you really love him?

MAR. Yes, passionately.

DOR. And, if we are to believe appearances, he loves you as well?

MAR. Yes; I believe he does.

DOR. So that you are both anxious to be married?

MAR. Certainly.

DOR. What do you mean to do, then, about that other marriage?

MAR. To die by my own hands, if I am forced to comply with it.

DOR. Very good; that's a resource which had not entered my head. You have only to die in order to get out of trouble. The remedy is really excellent! Pooh! it puts me out of all patience to hear this kind of talk.

MAR. Alas! how angry you seem, Dorine. You have no pity for the sorrows of others.

DOR. I have no pity for those who talk nonsense, and who, in the time of trial, are as soft as you are.

MAR. But how can I help, if timidity . . . .

DOR. But love requires firmness.

MAR. Have I wavered in my love for Valère? and is it not for him to obtain me from my father?

DOR. Yet, if your father is a downright churl who is gone crazy with his Tartuffe, and does not keep his promise about your marriage, is your lover to be blamed for that?

MAR. Yet you would not have me, by a haughty and contemptuous refusal, let everyone into the secret of my love? Whatever may be Valère's qualities, am I to forget for him the modesty of my sex, and my duty as a daughter? Would you have the state of my feelings exposed to the eyes of the world . . . .

DOR. No, no; I don't want anything. I see that you wish to have Mr. Tartuffe; and, now I think of it, I should be wrong to dissuade you from such a marriage. What reasons can I have to oppose your wishes? The match, in itself, is most advantageous. Mr. Tartuffe! oh! oh! that is not a proposal to be despised. Indeed, to say the truth, Tartuffe is no fool; and it is no small honour to be his better-half. Everybody attributes glory to him already. He is a nobleman in his village; and, withal, a well-built fellow, with red ears and florid cheeks. You will live only too happily with such a husband.

MAR. Alas!

DOR. What delight will be yours when you are the wife of such a handsome spouse!

MAR. Ah! leave off speaking in such a way, I beg of you, and help me to find some means of avoiding this marriage. I give up timidity, I hesitate no longer, and I am ready to do anything.

DOR. No, no; a daughter should obey her father, were he to ask her to marry an ape! After all, your fate is splendid! What do you complain of? You will go in a van to his village, which is fertile in cousins of both sexes, and it will be your joy to entertain them. You will at once be introduced, by way of footing, into the best society, and will go and visit the bailiff's wife and the assessor's lady, who will honour you with a folding chair. There, during the carnival, you may hope for a ball with the great band: to wit, two bagpipes, and sometimes Fagotin* and the marionettes; only, if your husband . . . .

MAR. Ah! you kill me! Try rather to assist me, Dorine. Give me your advice.

DOR. I am your servant.

MAR. Ah! I beseech you, Dorine!

DOR. No, for your punishment you deserve that the thing should take place.

MAR. Dear Dorine, do!

DOR. No.

MAR. If I must tell openly the feelings of my . . . .

DOR. Oh dear, no; Tartuffe is the man for you, and you shall have a taste of him.

MAR. You know that I have always trusted you; grant me . . . .

DOR. No, you shall be, ah! yes, you shall be tartufied.

MAR. Very well, since my fate draws no pity from you, leave me wholly to my despair; from it my heart will gather fresh strength, and I know an infallible remedy for my sufferings. (*is going.*)

DOR. Here! here! come back! I'll be angry no longer. I must have pity on you, in spite of everything.

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* A clever monkey, very well known in Paris in Molière's time.

MAR. I assure you, Dorine, that if I am forced to endure such misery, I have no resource left but to die.

DOR. Don't despair. We may, with some skill, prevent . . . . But here is Valère, your lover.

SCENE IV.—VALÈRE, MARIANNE, DORINE.

VAL. There is a report about, madam,* of which I had no idea, and which is really excellent.

MAR. What is it?

VAL. That you are going to be married to Tartuffe.

MAR. It is quite true that my father has taken this idea into his head.

VAL. Your father . . . .

MAR. Has changed his mind. He has just now proposed the thing to me.

VAL. What! seriously?

MAR. Yes, seriously. He openly declared himself for the match.

VAL. And what resolution have you taken?

MAR. I hardly know.

VAL. The answer is candid—You hardly know?

MAR. No.

VAL. No?

MAR. What do you advise me?

VAL. I? I advise you to take him for a husband.

MAR. You advise me to take him?

VAL. Yes.

MAR. Sincerely?

VAL. Of course. The choice is splendid, and is worth considering.

MAR. Very well, sir, I will follow the advice you give me.

VAL. I see that it will not be any great trouble to you to follow it.

MAR. No more trouble than it was for you to give it.

VAL. I gave it in order to afford you pleasure, madam.

MAR. And I will follow it in order to afford you pleasure, sir.

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* For "Madam" applied to unmarried women, *see* 'L'Impromptu de Versailles,' vol. i. p. 394.

DOR. (*drawing back at the furthest part of the stage*). Now, let us see what'll come out of all this.

VAL. It is thus you love me! and it was all deceit when you . . . .

MAR. This is nothing to the purpose. You tell me plainly that I ought to accept for a husband the man who is proposed to me, and I simply say that I will do so, since I receive such advice from you.

VAL. Do not make what I said an excuse. You had already taken a decision, and you simply make use of a frivolous pretext to break off your engagement to me.

MAR. Yes, it is exactly so.

VAL. I have not the least doubt about it; and never has your heart had the least affection for me.

MAR. Alas! you may think as you please.

VAL. Yes, yes, I can think as I please; but my offended heart will perhaps be beforehand with you in such a design; and I know who will accept my love and my hand.

MAR. I have no doubt of it; and the love claimed by merit . . . .

VAL. Ah! madam, let us leave merit aside. I possess very little, and your behaviour towards me is a proof of it; yet I trust in the indulgence that another may have for me, and she, knowing that I am free, will consent, without shame, to make up for my loss.

MAR. Your loss is not much; and you will soon be comforted in the exchange.

VAL. You may trust me for that; I shall do my best. Our honour demands that we should forget a heart that forgets us; but if, when we do our utmost, we do not succeed, we must hide our failure; for to love where we are loved no longer is but a weakness of which we ought to be ashamed.

MAR. These feelings are noble and worthy of praise.

VAL. No doubt; and they have a right to be approved. What! would you have me for ever keep in my heart the ardent love I feel for you? Would you have me see you belong to another without bestowing the heart you refuse elsewhere?

MAR. On the contrary, it is the very thing I hope for; and I should like to see the thing already done.

VAL. You would like to see it?

MAR. Certainly.

VAL. You have insulted me too long, madam, and I shall, to satisfy you, go this very moment. (*about to go.*)

MAR. Do so.

VAL. (*coming back*). At least, remember that it is you who drive me to this extremity. (*going.*)

MAR. Very well.

VAL. (*coming back again*). And that this decision is entirely due to your example.

MAR. To my example; let it be so.

VAL. (*going*). Enough! you shall be obeyed at once.

MAR. So much the better.

VAL. (*coming back again*). You see me here for the last time.

MAR. That's well.

VAL. (*goes, and when near the door turns round*). What is it you say?

MAR. What is the matter?

VAL. Did you not call me?

MAR. No, you are dreaming.

VAL. Very well, I go then. Farewell, madam. (*goes away slowly.*)

DOR. (*to* MARIANNE). I really believe you are crazy, with all this nonsense. I have left you to quarrel as much as you pleased, so as to see how far you would go.—I say, Mr. Valère! (*She stops* VALÈRE *by the arm.*)

VAL. (*affecting to resist*). Well, what do you want, Dorine?

DOR. Come here.

VAL. No, no, I feel too indignant. Do not stop me, since she wishes it.

DOR. Stop.

VAL. No, my mind is quite made up.

DOR. Ah!

MAR. (*aside*). He hates the sight of me; my presence drives him away, and I shall do well to free him from it. (*is going.*)

DOR. (*letting go of* VALÈRE *and running after* MARIANNE). The other, now! Where are you going?

MAR. Leave me.

DOR. You must come back.

MAR. No, no, Dorine, it is in vain for you to keep me.

VAL. (*aside*). I see plainly that my presence is hateful to her, and it is better that I should free her from it.

DOR. (*letting go of* MARIANNE *to run after* VALÈRE). Again! Plague you both!—Come, I will have it so. Cease all this fooling, and come here, both of you. (*She holds them both.*)

VAL. (*to* DORINE). But what is it you want?

MAR. (*to* DORINE). But what do you mean?

DOR. To set you all right again, and to help you out of your troubles. (*to* VALÈRE) Are you mad, to have such a quarrel?

VAL. Did you not hear how she spoke to me?

DOR. (*to* MARIANNE). Have you lost your senses, you, to get into such a passion?

MAR. Did you not see how it all happened, and how he treated me?

DOR. You are a silly couple. (*to* VALÈRE) She has no greater anxiety than to keep faithful to you. (*to* MARIANNE) You are the only one he loves, and he asks for nothing else than to marry you; I'll answer for it, upon my life.

MAR. (*to* VALÈRE). Why, then, give me such advice?

VAL. (*to* MARIANNE). Why, also, ask me for one on such a matter?

DOR. You are absurd, both of you. (*to* VALÈRE) Come, your hand. (*to* MARIANNE) Now, yours.

VAL. (*giving his hand to* DORINE). Why my hand?

MAR. (*also giving her hand*). What is the use of all this?

DOR. Come, come quickly, come on; you love each other more than you think. (VALÈRE *and* MARIANNE *hold each other's hand for a while without looking at each other.*)

VAL. (*turning to* MARIANNE). Don't do things too much against your will, and give a man a civil look. (MARIANNE *turns round to* VALÈRE *and smiles.*)

DOR. Now, really, lovers are very foolish.

VAL. (*to* MARIANNE). Have I not a right to complain of you? And, to say the least, are you not very

unkind to take pleasure in saying such a cruel thing to me?

MAR. But are you not also the most ungrateful lover . . . .

DOR. Let us leave all that aside for another time, and think of what we can do to ward off this tiresome marriage.

MAR. Tell us what means we must make use of?

DOR. We'll try everything. (*to* MARIANNE) Your father is absurd, (*to* VALÈRE) and it is ridiculous. (*to* MARIANNE) But you, the best you can do is to seem to acquiesce willingly in his wish; for, in case of alarm, it would be easier for you to put off this marriage. When we gain time we can find remedies for anything. Sometimes you will complain of sudden illness; that will necessitate a delay; at another you will bring forward some evil omens—either that you have met a dead body, have broken a looking-glass, or have dreamt of muddy water. But the best resource of all is that they cannot possibly make you his wife unless you say "Yes." However, if we mean our plans to be successful, the best thing for the present is, I think, for us not to be found talking together. (*to* VALÈRE) Go away at once; make use of your friends to force her father to keep the promise he made to you. We will, on our side, ask his brother to act with us, and gain the mother-in-law to our side. Good-bye.

VAL. (*to* MARIANNE). Whatever we may all do, my greatest hope is really in you.

MAR. (*to* VALÈRE). I cannot answer for the will of my father, but I will never belong to anyone but Valère.

VAL. Ah! how happy you make me! And, whatever they dare . . . .

DOR. Ah me! lovers are never tired of talking! You must be off, I tell you.

VAL. (*goes and comes back*). In short . . . .

DOR. What length of tongue! You go, sir, that way; and you, miss, this. (DORINE *pushes them both away and forces them to separate.*)

ACT III.

SCENE I.—DAMIS, DORINE.

DA. May Heaven this moment crush me; may everybody take me for ever for the greatest fool alive, if there is any respect or any power able to stop me, and if I do not . . . .

DOR. Pray moderate your anger; your father only just mentioned the matter; we do not always do what we propose, and it's a long way from the project to the execution.

DA. I will put a stop to the intrigues of that scoundrel, and will tell him in his ear a word or two which . . . .

DOR. Gently, gently; allow your stepmother to act first upon him and your father. She has a certain power over Tartuffe. He is very amiable towards her, and may have a certain tenderness of heart for her. Would to Heaven it were possible! It would be a fine thing! In short, she has sent for him on your account; she wants to sound him about this marriage, which makes you so furious, to know what he thinks, and to make him understand what unpleasantness it would cause in the family, if he encourages it at all. His servant says that he is at his prayers, so that I have not been able to see him; but he added that he will soon come down. Go, then, I beg of you, and leave me to wait for him.

DA. But I can be present at this interview.

DOR. No, no; better leave them alone.

DA. I should say nothing to him.

DOR. You think so; but we know what a state of anger you are put in at times; it is the surest way to spoil everything. You must go.

DA. No, I will listen without getting into a rage.

DOR. How tiresome you are! There he is coming. Go away. (DAMIS *hides himself in the small room at the side of the stage.*)

SCENE II.—TARTUFFE, DORINE.

TAR. (*as soon as he sees* DORINE *speaks to his servant, who is inside the house*). Laurent, lock up my hair-shirt and my scourge, and pray Heaven ever to enlighten you with grace.

If anybody comes to see me, say that I am gone to the prisons to distribute my alms.

DOR. (*aside*). What boasting and affectation!

TAR. What is it you want?

DOR. To tell you . . . .

TAR. (*taking a handkerchief out of his pocket*). Ah! Heaven! before you speak to me, take this handkerchief, pray.

DOR. What's the matter?

TAR. Cover this bosom, of which I cannot bear the sight. Such objects hurt the soul, and are conducive to sinful thoughts.

DOR. You are very susceptible to temptation, it seems, and the flesh makes great impression on you. I don't know why you should burn so quickly; but, as for me, I am not so easily moved, and were I to see your hide from tip to toe, I know pretty well that I should in no way be tempted.

TAR. Put more modesty into your speech, or I will leave you at once.

DOR. You need not, for I shall soon leave you in peace, and all I have to say is, that my lady is coming in this room, and would be glad to have a moment's talk with you.

TAR. Alas! With all my heart.

DOR. (*aside*). How sweet we are! In good troth, I still abide by what I said.

TAR. Will she soon be here?

DOR. Directly. I hear her, I believe; yes, here she is. I leave you together. (*Exit.*)

SCENE III.—ELMIRE, TARTUFFE.

TAR. May Heaven, in its great goodness, ever bestow on you health of body and of mind, and shower blessings on your days, according to the prayer of the lowest of its servants.

EL. I am much obliged to you for this pious wish; but let us sit down a moment to talk more comfortably.

TAR. (*seated*). Have you quite recovered from your indisposition?

EL. (*seated*). Quite. That feverishness soon left me.

TAR. My prayers have not merit sufficient to have obtained this favour from Heaven; but I have not offered up one petition in which you were not concerned.

EL. Your anxious zeal is really too great.

TAR. We cannot have too great anxiety for your dear health; and to give you back the full enjoyment of it, I would have sacrificed my own.

EL. You carry Christian charity very far, and I am under much obligation to you for all this kindness.

TAR. I do only what you deserve.

EL. I wished to speak to you in private on a certain matter, and I am glad that nobody is here to hear us.

TAR. And I also am delighted. It is very sweet for me, madam, to find myself alone with you . . . . I have often prayed Heaven to bestow this favour upon me; but till now it has been in vain.

EL. For my part, all I want is, that you should speak frankly, and hide nothing from me. (DAMIS, *without being seen, half opens the door of the room to hear the conversation.*)

TAR. And my wish is also, that you will allow me the cherished favour of speaking openly to you, and of giving you my word of honour, that if I have said anything against the visits which are paid here to your charms, it has never been done out of hatred to you; but rather out of an ardent zeal which carries me away, and from a sincere feeling of . . . .

EL. I quite understand it to be so, and I feel sure that it all proceeds from your anxiety for my good.

TAR. (*taking her hands and pressing them*). It is really so, madam, and my fervour is such . . . .

EL. Ah! you press my hand too much.

TAR. It is through an excess of zeal. I never intended to hurt you, I had much rather . . . .

(*He puts his hand on* ELMIRE'S *knees.*)

EL. Why do you put your hand there?

TAR. I was feeling your dress; the stuff is very soft.

EL. I beg of you to leave off, I am very ticklish.

(ELMIRE *draws back her chair, and* TARTUFFE *follows her with his.*)

TAR. (*handling* ELMIRE'S *collar*). Heaven! how mar-

vellous this point lace is! The work done in our days is perfectly wonderful, and never has such perfection been attained in everything.

EL. It is true. But let us speak of what brings me here. I have been told that my husband intends to break his word, and to give you his daughter in marriage. Is that true? Pray tell me?

TAR. He has merely alluded to it. But, madam, to tell you the truth, that is not the happiness for which my soul sighs; I find elsewhere the unspeakable attractions of the bliss which is the end of all my hopes.

EL. That is because you care not for earthly things.

TAR. My breast, madam, does not enclose a heart of flint.

EL. I know, for my part, that all your sighs tend towards Heaven, and that you have no desire for anything here below.

TAR. Our love for the beauty which is eternal, stifles not in us love for that which is fleeting and temporal; and we can easily be charmed with the perfect works Heaven has created. Its reflected attractions shine forth in such as you; but it is in you alone that its choicest wonders are centred. It has lavished upon you charms which dazzle the eye, and which touch the heart; and I have never gazed on you, perfect creature, without admiring the Creator of the universe, and without feeling my heart seized with an ardent love for the most beautiful picture in which He has reproduced Himself. At first I feared that this secret tenderness might be a skilful assault of the evil one; I even thought I would avoid your presence, fearing you might prove a stumbling-block to my salvation. But I have learnt, O adorable beauty, that my passion need not be a guilty one; that I can reconcile it with modesty; and I have given up my whole soul to it. I know that I am very presumptuous in making you the offer of such a heart as mine; but in my love I hope everything from you, nothing from the vain efforts of my unworthy self. In you is my hope, my happiness, my peace; on you depends my misery or bliss; and by your verdict I shall be for ever happy, if you wish it; unhappy if it pleases you.

EL. Quite a gallant declaration. But you must ac-

knowledge that it is rather surprising. It seems to me that you might have fortified your heart a little more carefully against temptation, and have paused before such a design. A devotee like you, who is everywhere spoken of as . . . .

TAR. Ah! Although a devotee, I am no less a man. When your celestial attractions burst upon the sight, the heart surrenders, and reasons no more. I know that such language from me seems somewhat strange; but after all, madam, I am not an angel; and, if you condemn the confession I make, you have only your own attractions to blame for it. As soon as I beheld their more than human beauty, my whole being was surrendered to you. The unspeakable sweetness of your divine charms forced the obstinate resistance of my heart; it overcame everything — fasting, prayers, and tears — and fixed all my hopes in you. A thousand times my eyes and my sighs have told you this; to-day I explain myself with words. Ah! if you consider with some kindness the tribulations and trials of your unworthy slave, if your goodness has compassion on me, and deigns to stoop so low as my nothingness, I shall ever have for you, O marvellous beauty, a devotion never to be equalled. With me your reputation runs no risk, and has no disgrace to fear. All those court gallants upon whom women dote, are noisy in their doings, boastful in their talk. Ever vain of their success, they never receive favours without divulging them; and their indiscreet tongues dishonour the altar on which their hearts sacrifice. But men like me burn with a hidden flame, and secrecy is for ever assured. The care which we take of our own reputation is a warrant to the woman who accepts our heart, that she will find love without scandal, and pleasure without fear.

EL. I have listened to you, and your rhetoric expresses itself in terms strong enough. Are you not afraid that I might be disposed to tell my husband of this passionate declaration, and that its sudden disclosure might influence the friendship which he has towards you?

TAR. I know that your tender-heartedness is too great, and that you will excuse, because of human frailty, the violent transports of a love which offends you, and will

consider, when you look at yourself, that people are not blind, and that flesh is weak.

EL. Others might take all this differently; but, I will endeavour to show my discretion. I will tell nothing to my husband of what has taken place; but, in return, I must require one thing of you, which is to forward honestly and sincerely the marriage which has been decided between Valère and Marianne, and renounce the unjust power which would enrich you with what belongs to another . . . .

SCENE IV.—ELMIRE, DAMIS, TARTUFFE.

DA. (*coming out of the side-room where he was hidden*). No, madam, no; all this must be made public. I was in that place and overheard everything. Heaven in its goodness seems to have directed my steps hither, to confound the pride of a wretch who wrongs me, and to guide me to a sure revenge for his hypocrisy and insolence. I will undeceive my father, and will show him in a clear, strong light the heart of the miscreant who dares to speak to you of love.

EL. No, Damis, it is sufficient if he promises to amend, and endeavours to deserve the forgiveness I have spoken of. Since I have promised it, let me abide by my word. I have no wish for scandal. A woman should despise these follies, and never trouble her husband's ears with them.

DA. You have your reasons for dealing thus with him, and I have mine for acting otherwise. It is a mockery to try to spare him. In the insolent pride of his canting bigotry he has already triumphed too much over my just wrath, and has caused too many troubles in our house. The impostor has governed my father but too long, and too long opposed my love and Valère's. It is right that my father's eyes should be opened to the perfidy of this villain. Heaven offers me an easy opportunity, and I am thankful for it. Were I not to seize it, I should deserve never to have another.

EL. Damis . . . .

DA. No, I will, with your permission, follow my own

counsel. My heart is overjoyed; and it is in vain for you to try and dissuade me from tasting the pleasure of revenge. I will at once make a full disclosure of all this. But here is the very person to give me satisfaction.

SCENE V.—ORGON, ELMIRE, DAMIS, TARTUFFE.

DA. Come, father, we will treat your arrival with a piece of news which will somewhat surprise you. You are well rewarded for all your caresses, and this gentleman well repays your tenderness. His great zeal for you has just shown itself, and stops at nothing short of dishonouring you. I have overheard him here, making to your wife an insulting declaration of a guilty love. She, amiable and gentle, and in her too great discretion, insisted upon keeping the matter a secret from you; but I cannot encourage such shamelessness, and I think it would be an offence to you were I to be silent about it.

EL. Yes, in my opinion, it is better not to trouble the peace of a husband by repeating to him such senseless words. Honour does not depend on our speaking of it; it is sufficient that we can defend ourselves. I have always had the same feelings on the subject; and you would have said nothing, Damis, if I had had any influence over you.

SCENE VI.—ORGON, DAMIS, TARTUFFE.

ORG. What do I hear! O Heaven! Is it possible!

TAR. Yes, brother, I am a wicked, guilty, miserable sinner, full of iniquity, the greatest wretch that earth ever bore. Each moment of my life is overburdened with pollution; it is but a long continuation of crimes and defilement, and I see that Heaven, to punish me for my sins, intends to mortify me on this occasion. However great may be the crime laid to my charge, I have neither the wish nor the pride to deny it. Believe what is said to you, arm all your wrath, and drive me like a criminal from your house. Whatever shame is heaped upon me, I deserve even greater.

ORG. (*to his son*). Ah! miscreant! how dare you try

to sully the spotless purity of his virtue with this falsehood?

DA. What! the feigned meekness of this hypocrite will make you give the lie to . . . .

ORG. Hold your tongue, you cursed plague!

TAR. Ah! let him speak; you blame him wrongfully, and you would do better to believe what he tells you. Why should you be so favourable to me in this instance? Do you know, after all, what I am capable of doing? Do you, brother, trust to the outward man; and do you think me good, because of what you see? No, no, you are deceived by appearances, and I am, alas! no better than they think. Everybody takes me for a good man, no doubt; but the truth is, that I am worthless. (*to* DAMIS) Yes, dear child, speak; call me perfidious, infamous, reprobate, thief, and murderer; load me with still more hateful names; I do not gainsay them, I have deserved them all; and on my knees I will suffer the ignominy due to the crimes of my shameful life. (*kneels.*)

ORG. (*to* TARTUFFE). Ah! brother, this is too much. (*to his son*) Does not your heart relent, traitor?

DA. What! Can his words so far deceive you as . . . .

ORG. Hold your tongue, rascal! (*raising* TARTUFFE) Brother, pray rise. (*to his son*) Wretch!

DA. He can . . . .

ORG. Hold your tongue!

DA. I am furious. What! I am taken for . . . .

ORG. If you say one word more, I'll break every bone . . . .

TAR. In Heaven's name, my brother, do not forget yourself! I had rather suffer the greatest injury than that he should receive the most trifling hurt on my account.

ORG. (*to his son*). Ungrateful wretch!

TAR. Leave him in peace. If I must on my knees ask forgiveness for him . . . . (*he falls on his knees,* ORGON *does the same, and embraces* TARTUFFE).

ORG. Alas! my brother, what are you doing? (*to his son*) See his goodness, rascal!

DA. So . . . .

ORG. Peace.

DA. What! I . . . .

ORG. Peace, I say. I know the motive which makes you accuse him. You all hate him, and I now see wife, children, and servants embittered against him. You have recourse to everything to drive this pious person from my home. But the more you strive to send him away, the more will I do to keep him. I will therefore, to crush the pride of the whole family, hasten his marriage with my daughter.

DA. You mean to force her to accept him?

ORG. Yes, traitor; and, to confound you all, it shall be done this very evening. Ah! I defy the whole household; I will show you that you have to obey me, and that I am the master here. Now, quick, retract your words and this very moment throw yourself at his feet to ask his forgiveness.

DA. Who? I? Ask forgiveness of the villain who by his impostures . . . . ?

ORG. What, scoundrel, you refuse, and abuse him besides? A cudgel! give me a cudgel! (*to* TARTUFFE) Don't prevent me. (*to his son*) Get out of my house this moment, and be careful you are never bold enough to set foot in it again.

DA. Yes, I shall go, but . . . .

ORG. Quick, then, decamp; I disinherit you, you scoundrel, and give you my curse besides.

SCENE VII.—ORGON, TARTUFFE.

ORG. To offend a holy man in that way!

TAR. O Heaven! forgive me as I forgive him; (*to* ORGON) if you could know the pain it gives me to see them try to blacken my character to you, dear brother . . . .

ORG. Alas!

TAR. The very thought of this ingratitude is a torture too great for me to bear . . . . the horror that I feel . . . . My heart is so full that I cannot speak . . . . It will kill me.

ORG. (*in tears, running to the door where he drove his son out*). Wretch! how I grieve to have spared you and not to have made an end of you on the spot. (*to* TARTUFFE) Compose yourself, brother, do not give way to grief.

TAR. No, let us put an end to all these painful disputes. I see what great troubles I occasion here, and I think, brother, that my duty is to leave your house.

ORG. How! surely you are not in earnest?

TAR. They hate me, and I see that they will try to make you doubt my good faith towards you.

ORG. What does it matter? Do you see me listen to them?

TAR. I have no doubt but that they will persevere in their attacks: and these very reports which you refuse to believe to-day may another time be credited by you.

ORG. No, brother, never.

TAR. Ah! brother, a wife can easily influence the mind of her husband.

ORG. No, no.

TAR. Let me go away, and thus remove from them all occasion of attacking me.

ORG. No, you will stop here; my life depends upon it.

TAR. Well, if it is so, I must do violence to myself. Ah, if you only would . . . .

ORG. No!

TAR. I yield. Let us say no more about it. But I know how I must behave in future. Honour is a delicate matter, and friendship requires me to prevent reports and causes for suspicion. I will avoid your wife, and you shall never see me . . . .

ORG. No, you will see and speak to her in spite of everybody. I delight in vexing people; and I wish you to be seen in her company at all hours of the day. This is not all. The better to brave them, I will have no other heir but you, and I will go at once and draw up a deed of gift, by which you will inherit all my possessions. A true, faithful friend whom I take for son-in-law is more precious to me than son, wife, or relations. Will you not accept what I propose?

TAR. May Heaven's will be done in all things!

ORG. Poor man! Let us go forthwith to draw up the deed, and then let envy burst with rage.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—CLÉANTE, TARTUFFE.

CLE. Yes, it is in everybody's mouth, and I am only telling you the truth. The rumours to which this news gives rise, reflect little credit upon you, and I am glad I have met with you, sir, so that I might tell you plainly my mind on the subject. I do not inquire into the reports that are spread about, I pass them by and admit the worst view of the case. I will suppose that Damis has not acted well, and that you have been wrongly accused. Yet is it not the part of a good Christian to forgive all injuries and to banish from his heart every desire of revenge? Should you allow a son to be driven away from his father's house, because you have fallen out with him? I repeat it—I only speak the simple truth when I tell you that great and small are scandalised by it. Believe me, you had better bring peace back to this house, and not push matters to extremes. Make a sacrifice to God of your resentment, and restore the son to his father's favour.

TAR. Alas! sir, I have no dearer wish at heart; I bear him no ill-will; I forgive him everything. I've nothing to blame him for, and would serve him to the best of my power. But the interests of Heaven are against it, and if he comes I must leave; after his inconceivable behaviour I can hold no intercourse with him without scandal. Imagine what the world would say! they would impute it to sheer policy on my part, and would say everywhere that, knowing myself to be guilty, I affect a charitable zeal for my accuser; that I fear him and wish to conciliate him, so that by underhand dealings I may engage him to silence.

CLE. These are but sham excuses, sir, and your reasons are too far-fetched. Why should you take the interests of Heaven upon yourself? Cannot Heaven punish the guilty without our help? Leave vengeance to God, remember the forgiveness which He claims from us. Care not to be judged of men when you do His sovereign will. What! the paltry fear of what the world may say can prevent the accomplishment of a good and noble action? No, no; let

us ever do what Heaven has commanded, and not trouble ourselves with any other care.

TAR. I have already told you, sir, that I forgive him, and in that I do what Heaven has commanded; but, after the scandal and insult of to-day, Heaven does not require that I should live with him.

CLE. And does it ask from you, sir, to give a ready ear to what a mere caprice dictates to the father? and to accept an inheritance to which you have no right?

TAR. Those who know me will not think that I act from mercenary motives. The riches of this world have no attraction for me; I am not dazzled by their deceptive glitter. If I bring myself to accept the gift of this property from the father, it is merely that I am afraid of its falling into wicked hands, and of its being shared by those who would make a criminal use of it in the world and would not employ it, as I propose to do, for the glory of Heaven and the well-being of my fellow-men.

CLE. Ah! sir, banish these delicate scruples from your mind, for they may give cause for the rightful heir to complain. Suffer him, without giving yourself any such anxiety, to enjoy his rights at his own peril; and consider that it is better for him to make a bad use of it, than that you should be accused of defrauding him of it. I only wonder that you could have heard such a proposal without confusion. For, in truth, do we find among the maxims of true piety any which enjoins the stripping a lawful heir of his inheritance? And if Heaven has put any invincible obstacle against your living with Damis, would it not be more honourable for you to retire like a discreet person, than to suffer an only son to be turned out of doors for you? Believe me, sir, it would be giving your probity . . . .

TAR. Sir, it is half-past three: certain devotions call me upstairs, pray excuse me for leaving you so soon. (*Exit.*)

CLE. Ah!

SCENE II.—ELMIRE, MARIANNE, CLÉANTE, DORINE.

DOR. (*to* CLÉANTE). For pity's sake join us in all we do for her, sir. She is in a terrible state of dread, and the marriage-contract which her father has got ready for to-

night drives her to despair. Here he comes. Let us all unite our efforts, I beg of you, and try either by force or cunning to bring to nought the wretched design which has thrown us all into consternation.

SCENE III.—ORGON, ELMIRE, MARIANNE, CLÉANTE, DORINE.

ORG. Ah! I am delighted to find you all here. (*to* MARIANNE) In this contract I bring wherewith to please you. You know, do you not, what I mean?

MAR. (*at* ORGON'S *feet*). Father! in the name of Heaven, which is a witness of my grief; in the name of all that can move your heart, forego the rights my birth gives you, and do not exact this obedience from me. Do not by such a harsh law compel me to complain to Heaven of my duty to you, and do not, alas! render most miserable the life I owe you. If, contrary to the sweet hopes which I had cherished, you now forbid me to belong to the man I love, I beseech you on my knees at least to save me from the wretchedness of belonging to him I abhor. Do not drive me to despair by making use of all your power over me.

ORG. (*moved and aside*). Stand firm, my heart! No human weakness!

MAR. I do not feel aggrieved by your tenderness for him; you can act as your heart prompts you—give him all you possess, and join to it what is mine. I consent, and give it up to him with all my heart. But do not dispose in the same way of my person; suffer me to wear out the rest of my wretched life in the austere discipline of a convent.

ORG. Ah, yes, you are, I see, one of those would-be nuns, because your father crosses your forbidden love. Stand up! The more your heart recoils from the match, the better it will be for your salvation. Mortify your senses by this marriage, and trouble me no longer on the subject.

DOR. But what . . . .

ORG. Hold your tongue; speak to people of your own set. I forbid you once and for all to say a word.

CLE. If you will allow me to speak and advise . . . .

ORG. Brother, your advice is of the best possible kind; it is full of truth and good sense, and I value it highly. You will, however, allow me not to avail myself of it.

EL. (*to her husband*). I hardly know what to say in the face of all this, and I really admire you in your blindness. You must be bewitched with the man and altogether prepossessed in his favour for you to deny the truth of what we tell you took place to-day!

ORG. I am your humble servant, but I judge by appearances. I know how lenient you are towards my rascal of a son, and see that you were afraid of disowning the trick he would have played to the poor fellow. In short, you took the matter too easily for me to believe you; you would have been more moved had the thing been true.

EL. Is it necessary for our honour, to take up arms so furiously at a simple declaration of love? Is it not possible to give a fitting answer without anger in our eyes and invectives in our mouth? For my part, I listen with mere indifference to such talk, and I care not to make any ado about it. I prefer to show that virtue can be accompanied by gentleness, and I have no respect for those savage prudes who defend their honour with tooth and nail, and who at the slightest word are ready to tear a man's eyes out. Heaven preserve me from such discretion! I prefer a virtue with nothing of the tigress about it, for I believe that a quiet and cold rebuff is quite as efficient.

ORG. In short, I know all about this business, and no words of yours can alter my conviction.

EL. I wonder more and more at your strange weakness. But what answer would your credulity give, if I made you see that we have told you the truth?

ORG. See?

EL. Yes.

ORG. Rubbish.

EL. But, still, suppose I find a way of showing it to you, so that you cannot mistake it?

ORG. Moonshine.

EL. What a strange man you are! Yet at least answer me. I do not ask you to believe us; but suppose

we could find a place where you can see and hear all about what we have told you, what would you say then of your pious man?

ORG. In that case, I should say that . . . . I should say nothing; for, in short, it is impossible.

EL. Your error lasts too long, and you have taxed me too long with falsehood. You must, to satisfy me, without delay, be a witness of what I have said.

ORG. Be it so; I take you at your word. We will see how far you can make your promise good.

EL. (*to* DORINE). Get him to come in here.

DOR. (*to* ELMIRE). He is very crafty, and, maybe, it will be a difficult matter to catch him.

EL. (*to* DORINE). No, we are easily duped by those we love, and we deceive ourselves through our own conceit. Tell him to come, (*to* CLÉANTE *and* MARIANNE) and you withdraw.

SCENE IV.—ELMIRE, ORGON.

EL. Now bring the table here, and get under it.

ORG. Get under it?

EL. It is important that you should be well concealed.

ORG. But why under the table?

EL. Ah! never mind; do what I tell you. I have my plan quite ready in my head, and you shall judge. Place yourself where I tell you, and then be careful that you are neither seen nor heard.

ORG. I must say that my condescension is very great. However, I will see you through your scheme.

EL. You will have nothing to answer me. (*to her husband, who is under the table*) Mind! I'm going to speak on a strange subject, and you must not be shocked. I have a right to say whatever I choose, since it is to convince you, as I have promised to do. I will, by coaxing speeches, make the hypocrite drop his mask, will flatter the insolent desires of his love, and leave free room to his audacity. As it is only because of you, and the better to confound him, that I shall affect to return his love, I will cease as soon as you feel convinced, and things need go no

further than you please. It is for you to spare your wife, to stop his mad purpose when you think matters have been carried far enough, and to suffer me to be exposed to his insolence only as far as is necessary to disabuse you. This is your concern, you can act when you like, and . . . . He is coming . . . . Do not move, and be careful that you do not show yourself.

SCENE V.—TARTUFFE, ELMIRE, ORGON (*under the table*).

TAR. I am told that you wish to speak with me here.

EL. Yes, I have important things to reveal to you. But shut this door before I begin, and look everywhere to see if anyone can overhear us; (TARTUFFE *goes to shut the door and returns*) it will never do to risk having over again such an affair as that of this morning. Never in my life was I so taken by surprise, and Damis put me in a terrible fright on your account. You saw how I tried all I could to baffle his design and to calm his anger. My confusion was so great, it is true, that the thought of denying his accusations never came to my mind. But, thank Heaven, it is all for the best, and things are through it on a much safer footing. The esteem in which you are held has dispersed the storm; and my husband can have no suspicion of you, for, in order to set at defiance ill-natured comments, he wishes us to be constantly together. I can therefore be locked up here alone with you without fear of incurring blame; and thus I feel authorized to open to you a heart too forward perhaps in answering your love.

TAR. This language, madam, is somewhat hard for me to understand, and you spoke but lately in a very different strain.

EL. Ah! if such a refusal has offended you, how little you know the heart of woman, and how little you understand what we mean when we so feebly defend ourselves! At such times our modesty always struggles against any tender feelings a lover inspires. Whatever reasons we may find to justify the love that conquers us, there is always a certain shame attached to the avowal of

it. At first we try to avoid this avowal, but from our manner it is easy to see that our heart surrenders; that, simply for the sake of honour, our lips refuse to give words to our wishes; and that, while refusing, we promise everything.—I feel that I am making a very free confession to you, and not sparing woman's modesty; but I have begun, and will continue.—Should I have been so anxious to restrain Damis; should I have listened, think you, with so much calmness to your declaration throughout, and have taken the thing as you know I did, if the offer of your heart had not been a pleasure to me? When I tried to make you renounce the match which had just been proposed, what could you infer from such an action, if it was not that I felt interested in you, and that I should have experienced great sorrow if by such a marriage you had divided that affection which I wanted wholly to be mine!

TAR. It is certainly, madam, an extreme delight to hear such words from the lips of one we love; and their honey diffuses through all my senses a soothing softness I never knew till now. To please you is the supreme study of my life, and to be sure of your love my greatest happiness. Yet, forgive me, madam, if my heart somewhat doubts its felicity, and fancies that these words may be a specious artifice to make me break off the marriage which is soon to take place; and, if I may speak openly to you, I shall not trust such sweet language unless some of the favours after which I sigh have assured me of their sincerity, and fix in my mind a sure belief in the enchanting goodness you bear for me.

EL. (*after having coughed to draw her husband's attention*). What! would you proceed so fast, and from the first exhaust the tenderness of my heart? I do myself violence to make you a sweet declaration of love; yet this is not enough for you, and to satisfy you the affair must be pushed even to the last extreme.

TAR. The less we deserve a blessing, the less we dare to hope for it. Love cannot feel secure with words only. We easily suspect a lot brimful of happiness, and we must enjoy the possession of it, before we can believe in it. I feel myself so unworthy of your favours that I doubt the

success of my boldness, and I will believe nothing, madam, before you give real proofs.

EL. Alas! how tyrannical your passion is! How it bewilders my mind! With what fierce sway it takes possession of my heart! and with what violence it exacts what it desires! Is there no avoiding your pursuit? and will you not allow me time to breathe? Is it right that you should persist so peremptorily? Should you exact what you desire with such tenacity, and thus abuse by your pressing ardour the weakness that you see I have for you?

TAR. But if you receive my love with kindness, why refuse me convincing proof?

EL. But how can I consent to what you ask without offending Heaven, of which you are always speaking?

TAR. If it is only Heaven you can oppose to my wishes, it is nothing for me to remove such an obstacle; and that ought not to be a restraint to your love.

EL. But they make us so terribly afraid of the judgments of Heaven.

TAR. I can, madam, dissipate these ridiculous terrors, and I understand the art of allaying scruples. It is true that Heaven forbids certain gratifications, but there are means of compounding with it upon such matters, and of rectifying the evil of the act by the purity of the intention.* We shall be able to initiate you into all those secrets, madam; all you have to do is to suffer yourself to be led by me. Satisfy my wishes, and be without fear. I will be answerable for everything and take the sin upon myself. (ELMIRE *coughs louder.*) You cough very much, madam.

EL. Yes, I am suffering torture.

TAR. Will you accept a piece of this liquorice?

EL. It is an obstinate cold, and I see plainly that all the liquorice in the world will do no good in this case.

TAR. That is certainly very trying.

EL. Yes, more than can be expressed.

TAR. In short, your scruples, madam, are easy to remove. You are sure of an inviolable secrecy with me, and

* It is a scoundrel who speaks.—Note by MOLIÈRE.

it is only publicity which makes the wrong. The scandal is what constitutes the offence, and to sin in secret is not to sin at all.*

EL. (*coughing and knocking the table*). Well, I see that I have no alternative but to yield, that I must consent to grant you everything, and that unless I do so I must not expect to satisfy or to convince. It is surely very hard to come to this, and I give way much against my will; but since it seems a settled thing that I should be driven to it, since I cannot be believed without more convincing proofs, in spite of all I may say, I must perforce make up my mind to it and give satisfaction. If my thus consenting carries any offence with it, so much the worse for him who forces me to do this violence to myself. The fault certainly cannot be accounted mine.†

TAR. No, madam, I take it entirely upon myself, and the thing in itself . . . .

EL. Just open this door, I pray you, and see if my husband is not in the passage.

TAR. There is no need, madam, to trouble about him. Between ourselves, he is a man to be led by the nose. He is more likely to be proud of finding us together, and I have brought him to the point of seeing everything without believing in anything.

EL. All the same, go for a moment and look everywhere very carefully, I beg of you.

SCENE VI.—ORGON, ELMIRE.

ORG. (*coming from under the table*). We have here, I acknowledge, an abominable scoundrel. I cannot get over it; I feel stunned.

EL. What! you come out so soon! You are jesting. Go under the table again; it is not time yet; wait to see the end in order to feel quite sure, and don't trust to mere surmises.

ORG. No, never did hell produce anything more wicked.

EL. Nonsense! you should not believe things too

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* *See* Pascal, seventh 'Lettre Provinciale.'

† It is scarcely necessary to say that Elmire is really speaking to her husband.

ligh ly. Be sure that you feel quite convinced before you surrender, and be in no hurry, for fear of a mistake.

(*She hides* ORGON *behind her.*)

SCENE VII.—TARTUFFE, ELMIRE, ORGON.

TAR. (*not seeing* ORGON). Everything is propitious to me. I have searched every room, there is no one there; and my delighted soul . . . . (TARTUFFE *goes with open arms to embrace* ELMIRE; *she draws back and* TARTUFFE *sees* ORGON.)

ORG. (*stopping* TARTUFFE). Gently, gently, you yield too freely to your amorous transports, and you should be less imperious in your desires. Oh! oh! holy man, you wanted to make a fool of me! How you give way to temptation! You marry my daughter, and covet my wife! I for a long time doubted if you were in earnest, and I expected every moment that you would change your tone, but this is carrying the proof far enough; I am satisfied, and I require no further test.

EL. (*to* TARTUFFE). It is much against my inclination that I have done all this, but I have been driven to the necessity of treating you thus.

TAR. (*to* ORGON). What! can you believe . . . .

ORG. Come, no noise, out of this house, and without ceremony.

TAR. My intention . . . .

ORG. Your speeches are no longer in season; leave this house at once.

TAR. It is to you to leave the house, you who speak as if you were master here. The house belongs to me, and I will make you know it. I will soon show you that it is vain for you to resort to these base falsehoods to quarrel with me. You little know what you do when you insult me. I can confound and punish imposture, avenge offended Heaven, and make those repent who speak of driving me hence.

SCENE VIII.—ELMIRE, ORGON.

EL. What language is this? What is it he means?

ORG. Alas! I feel quite confused, and have little reason to laugh.

EL. What is it?

ORG. What he says shows me my error, and the deed of gift troubles my mind.

EL. The deed of gift?

ORG. Yes, the thing is done. But I have something else to make me anxious.

EL. And what is that?

ORG. I will tell you everything; but first let us see if a certain casket is still upstairs.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—ORGON, CLÉANTE.

CLE. Where are you running?

ORG. Alas! how can I tell!

CLE. It seems to me that the first thing to be done is to consult together, and to see what steps we can take in this emergency.

ORG. This casket troubles me terribly; I am more distressed about it than about all the rest put together.

CLE. Does this casket contain any important secret?

ORG. It is a trust which Argan, my unfortunate friend, entrusted to my keeping with great secrecy. He chose me of all others when he fled. It contains papers, he told me, on which his life and fortune depend.

CLE. How, then, could you trust them into other hands?

ORG. A scruple of conscience made me go straight to the scoundrel to confide in him; by his sophistry he persuaded me to give him the casket to keep, so that in case of any inquiry I might have ready at hand a subterfuge to ease my conscience, while taking oath contrary to the truth.*

CLE. According to appearances you are in a very

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* This is the Jesuitical doctrine of "mental reservation" which Tartuffe has taught to Orgon, just as he wished to teach Elmire that of "purity of intention." (*See* Pascal on "Mental reservation.")

awkward position; the deed of gift and this confidence, to speak to you frankly, are steps which you have taken with little consideration; you may be led far with such pledges. This man has such power over you, that it is a great imprudence in you to irritate him, and you would do better to look for some gentler means of settling with him.

ORG. What! to hide such a double and wicked heart under so fair a semblance of ardent piety! And I, who took in a begging pauper . . . . There, it's all over, I renounce all pious people, I shall have the greatest abhorrence for them, and shall be worse than the devil to them in future.

CLE. Just like you! Now we have another fit of excess: you never keep within bounds in anything: you never listen to healthy common sense, and always rush from one extreme to another. You see your mistake and acknowledge that you were deceived by a false appearance of piety: but to make up for this, what necessity is there to be guilty of a worse mistake? Why should you make no difference between the heart of a rascally villain and that of every good man? Because a scoundrel has shamelessly imposed upon you under the solemn mask of austerity, must you go and fancy that everybody is like him, and that there are no sincere people in the world? Leave such inferences to unbelievers; distinguish virtue from its appearance; never be too hasty in giving your esteem, and avoid either extreme. Keep, if you can, from doing homage to imposture, but at the same time do not injure true piety. And if you must lean towards one extreme, better to offend as you already have done.

SCENE II.—ORGON, CLÉANTE, DAMIS.

DA. What! father, is it true that the rascal threatens you, that he has lost the remembrance of all you have done for him, and that in his cowardly and shameless arrogance he makes use of your own goodness as an arm against you?

ORG. Yes, even so, my son; and I cannot tell you what intolerable grief it is to me.

DA. Leave him to me. I will crop his ears for him; no one should hesitate to punish such insolence; I will rid you of him, and end all this business. I must crush him.

CLE. You speak exactly like a foolish young fellow. Keep these violent outbursts within bounds, I pray you. We live under a king and in an age when we gain little by violence.

SCENE III.—MADAME PERNELLE, ORGON, ELMIRE, CLÉANTE, MARIANNE, DAMIS, DORINE.

PER. What is all this I hear? What dreadful, mysterious reports are those?

ORG. They are strange things which I have witnessed with my own eyes, and you see how I am rewarded for all my goodness. I kindly pick up a poor destitute fellow; I take him into my own house, and treat him like my own brother; I heap favours upon him every day; I give him my daughter, and everything I possess; and yet, in the meanwhile, the perfidious and infamous rascal forms the wicked project of seducing my wife; and not satisfied with so base an attempt, he now dares to threaten me with my own gifts. He is making use, for my own ruin, of those advantages which my indiscreet kindness has put into his hands; he is trying to deprive me of my estates, and to reduce me to the state of beggary from whence I rescued him.

DOR. Poor man!

PER. I can never believe, my son, that he would commit so base an action.

ORG. What?

PER. Good people are always subject to envy.

ORG. What do you mean, mother?

PER. That you live after a strange sort here, and that I am but too well aware of the ill-will they all bear him.

ORG. What has this ill-will to do with what I have just told you?

PER. I have told it you a hundred times when you were young, that in this world virtue is ever liable to persecu-

tion, and that, although the envious die, envy never dies.

ORG. But what has this to do with what has happened to-day?

PER. They have concocted a hundred foolish stories against him.

ORG. I have already told you that I saw it all myself.

PER. The malice of evil-disposed persons is very great.

ORG. You would make me swear, mother! I tell you that I saw his audacious attempt with my own eyes.

PER. Evil tongues have always some venom to pour forth; and here below there is nothing proof against them.

ORG. You are maintaining a very senseless argument. I saw it, I tell you; saw it with my own eyes; what you can call s–a–w, saw! Must I din it over and over into your ears, and shout as loud as half-a-dozen people?

PER. Gracious goodness! appearances often deceive us. We must not always judge by what we see.

ORG. I shall go mad.

PER. We are by nature prone to judge wrongly, and good is often mistaken for evil.

ORG. I ought to look upon his desire of seducing my wife as charitable?

PER. You ought to have good reasons before you accuse another, and you should have waited till you were quite sure of the fact.

ORG. Heaven save the mark! how could I be more sure? I suppose, mother, I ought to have waited till . . . . you will make me say something foolish.

PER. In short, his soul is possessed with too pure a zeal, and I cannot possibly conceive that he would think of attempting what you accuse him of.

ORG. If you were not my mother, I really don't know what I might not say to you, you make me so savage.

DOR. (*to* ORGON). A fair repayment of things in this world; you would believe nobody, and now you are not believed yourself.

CLE. We are wasting in mere trifles the precious time which we ought to employ in devising what measures to take. We should not sleep when a villain threatens us.

DA. What! you think his impudence can go so far as . . . .

EL. I hardly think it possible. His ingratitude would be too glaring, were he to carry his threats into execution.

CLE. Do not trust to that. He will find means to justify his doings against you, and, for a less matter than this, people have been involved in sad troubles. I repeat it: knowing all the arms he had against you, you should not have pushed him so far.

ORG. You are right; but what could I do? In the face of that scoundrel's impudence I was not master of my own resentment.

CLE. I wish it were possible to patch up a peace between you.

EL. If I had only known what he had in his possession, I would not have given cause for such uneasiness, and my . . . .

ORG. (*to* DORINE, *on seeing* MR. LOYAL *coming*). What does that man want? Go at once and find out. I am, indeed, in a fit state of mind for people to come and see me!

SCENE IV.—ORGON, MADAME PERNELLE, ELMIRE, MARIANNE, CLÉANTE, DAMIS, DORINE, MR. LOYAL.

LOY. (*to* DORINE *at the further part of the stage*). Good day, my dear sister; pray let me speak to your master.

DOR. He is with friends, and I do not think he can see anyone just now.

LOY. I would not be intrusive. I feel sure that he will find nothing unpleasant in my visit; in fact, I come for something which will be very gratifying to him.

DOR. What is your name?

LOY. Only tell him that I come from Mr. Tartuffe, for his benefit.

DOR. (*to* ORGON). It is a man who comes in a civil way from Mr. Tartuffe, on some business which will make you glad, he says.

CLE. (*to* ORGON). You must see who it is, and what the man wants.

ORG. (*to* CLÉANTE). He is coming, perhaps, to settle

matters between us in a friendly way. How, in this case, ought I to behave to him?

CLE. Don't show your resentment, and, if he speaks of an agreement, listen to him.

LOY. (*to* ORGON). Your servant, sir; may Heaven punish whoever wrongs you, and may it be as favourable to you, sir, as I wish.

ORG. (*aside to* CLÉANTE). This pleasant beginning agrees with my conjectures, and augurs some sort of reconciliation.

LOY. All your family was always dear to me, and I served your father.

ORG. Sir, I am sorry and ashamed to say that I do not know who you are, neither do I remember your name.

LOY. My name is Loyal; I was born in Normandy,* and am a royal bailiff in spite of envy. For the last forty years I have had the good fortune to fill the office, thanks to Heaven, with great credit; and I come, sir, with your leave, to serve you the writ of a certain order.

ORG. What! you are here . . . .

LOY. Gently, sir, I beg. It is merely a summons: a notice for you to leave this place, you and yours, to take away all your goods and chattels, and make room for others, without delay or adjournment, as hereby decreed.

ORG. I! leave this place?

LOY. Yes, sir, if you please. The house incontestably belongs, as you are well aware, to the good Mr. Tartuffe. He is now lord and master of your estates, according to a deed I have in my keeping. It is in due form, and cannot be challenged.

DA. (*to* MR. LOYAL). This great impudence is, indeed, worthy of all admiration.

LOY. (*to* DAMIS). Sir, I have nothing at all to do with you. (*pointing to* ORGON) My business is with this gentleman. He is tractable and gentle, and knows too well the duty of a gentleman to try and oppose authority.

ORG. But . . . .

LOY. Yes, sir, I know that you would not for anything

* The Normans have the reputation of being very cunning and cautious, and also of being fond of going to law.

show contumacy; and that you will allow me, like a reasonable man, to execute the orders I have received.

DA. You may chance to catch a good drubbing on your black skirt, Mr. Bailiff, I assure you.

LOY. (*to* ORGON). Sir, see that your son keeps silent or retires. I should be sorry to be forced to put your name down in my official report.

DA. (*aside*). This Mr. Loyal has a strangely disloyal look.

LOY. I feel greatly for all good men, and I wished to take the business upon myself in order to oblige you and to render you service. By so doing I prevented the choice from falling upon others, who might not have had the same consideration that I have for you, and might have proceeded in a less gentle manner.

ORG. And what worse thing can be done than to order people to go out of their house?

LOY. I will allow you time, and will suspend until to-morrow, sir, the execution of the writ. I shall only come, without noise or scandal, to spend the night here with ten of my people. For form's sake, you must, if you please, bring me the keys before going to bed. I shall be careful not to trouble your rest, and to suffer nothing unseemly to happen. To-morrow morning you must, however, exert yourself and clear the house to the very last thing. My men will help you in this; I have chosen them strong, so that they might assist you in removing everything. Nobody can act better than I am doing, I feel sure; and, as I treat you with the greatest consideration, I will ask of you, sir, to act as well by me, and to see that I am in no way hindered in the execution of my duty.

ORG. (*aside*). I'd give the hundred best louis which are left me, to be able to administer to that ugly face of his the soundest blows that were ever dealt.

CLE. (*aside to* ORGON). Forbear, and don't make things worse.

DA. Before such strange insolence I can hardly restrain myself, and my fingers itch to be at him.

DOR. To such a broad back, in good faith, Mr. Loyal, a sound cudgelling would not seem out of place.

LOY. Such shameful words may be punished, my dear, and women, too, are answerable to the law.

CLE. (*to* MR. LOYAL). Enough, sir; enough. Give us the paper, please, and go.

LOY. Good day. May Heaven bless ye all!

ORG. And may it confound both you and the scoundrel who sends you!

SCENE V.—ORGON, MADAME PERNELLE, ELMIRE, CLÉANTE, MARIANNE, DAMIS, DORINE.

ORG. Well! mother, you see whether I am right; and you can judge of the rest by the writ. Do you at last acknowledge his rascality?

PER. I am thunderstruck, and can scarcely believe my eyes and ears.

DOR. (*to* ORGON). You are wrong, sir, to complain, and wrong to blame him. His pious intentions are thus confirmed. His love for his neighbour is great; he knows that riches often corrupt men, and it is out of pure charity that he takes away from you all that may prove a hindrance to your salvation.

ORG. Must I always be reminding you to hold your tongue?

CLE. (*to* ORGON). Let us go and see what course we had better follow.

EL. Yes, go; expose the insolent ingratitude of the wretch. Such a proceeding must destroy the validity of the deed. His perfidy will appear too odious for him to be able to obtain the success he trusts in.

SCENE VI.—VALÈRE, ORGON, MADAME PERNELLE, ELMIRE, CLÉANTE, MARIANNE, DAMIS, DORINE.

VAL. It is with regret, sir, that I come to distress you, but I am forced to it by the urgency of the danger. A friend with whom I am most intimate, and who knows what interest I take in all that concerns you, has, for my sake, by delicate means, broken through the secrecy we owe to the affairs of state, and has just sent me intelli-

gence, the purport of which is that you had better have recourse to immediate flight. The villain who has so long imposed on you, an hour ago accused you before the king; and, among other charges which he brings against you, he has put in his hands the important casket of a state criminal, of whom, he said, you kept the guilty secret in contempt of your duty as a subject. I am not informed of the particulars of the crime laid to your charge, but a warrant is issued against you, and, the better to execute it, he himself is appointed to accompany the person who is to arrest you.

CLE. Now his pretensions are strengthened; this is how the scoundrel seeks to possess himself of your estate.

ORG. Man is, I must own, a wretched animal!

VAL. The least delay may prove fatal to you. I have my coach at the door, so as to take you away at once, and a thousand louis which I have brought for you. Lose no time; the blow is crushing, and one which can only be parried by flight. I will take you myself to a place of safety, and will accompany you to the last in your escape.

ORG. Alas! what thanks do I not owe to your kindness? I must put off to another time my thanks to you for it. I pray Heaven it may be given to me to acknowledge this generous help. Farewell! take care, all of you . . . .

CLE. Go quickly. We shall see that everything necessary is done.

SCENE VII.—TARTUFFE, A POLICE OFFICER, MADAME PERNELLE, ORGON, ELMIRE, CLÉANTE, MARIANNE, VALÈRE, DAMIS, DORINE.

TAR. (*stopping* ORGON). Gently, sir, gently; not so fast, I beg. You have not far to go to find a lodging, and you are a prisoner in the king's name.

ORG. Wretch! you had reserved this shaft for the last; by it you finish me, and crown all your perfidies.

TAR. Your abuse has no power to disturb me, and I know how to suffer everything for the sake of Heaven.

CLE. Your moderation is really great, we must acknowledge.

DA. How impudently the infamous wretch sports with Heaven!

TAR. Your anger cannot move me; I have no other wish but to fulfil my duty.

MAR. You may claim great glory from the performance of this duty; it is a very honourable employment for you.

TAR. The employment cannot be otherwise than glorious, when it comes from the power that sends me here.

ORG. But do you remember that my charitable hand ungrateful scoundrel, raised you from a state of misery?

TAR. Yes, I know what help I have received from you; but the interest of my king is my first duty. The just obligation of this sacred duty stifles in my heart all other claims, and I would sacrifice to it friend, wife, relations, and myself with them.

EL. The impostor!

DOR. With what treacherous cunning he makes a cloak of all that men revere.

CLE. But if the zeal you speak of is so perfect, how is it that to show it, you wait till he has surprised you making love to his wife? How is it that you inform against him, only after self-respect forces him to send you away? I will not say that the gift of all his possessions he made over to you should have prevented you from doing your duty, but, since you wished to treat him as a criminal, why did you consent to accept anything from him?

TAR. (*to the Officer*). I beg of you, sir, to deliver me from all this noise, and to act according to the orders you have received.

OFFICER. I have certainly put off too long the discharge of my duty, and you very rightly remind me of it. To execute my order, follow me immediately to the prison in which a place is assigned to you.

TAR. Who? I, sir?

OFFICER. Yes, you.

TAR. Why to prison?

OFFICER. To you I have no account to render. (*to* ORGON) Pray, sir, recover from your great alarm. We live under a king who is an enemy to fraud; a king who can read the heart, and whom all the arts of impostors cannot deceive. His great mind, endowed with delicate discernment, at all times sees things in their true light. He is never betrayed into exaggeration, and his sound reason knows not excess. On men of worth he bestows immortal glory; but he dispenses his favours without blindness, and his love for the truly great does not prevent him from feeling the horror which the vicious must inspire. This man had no chance of deceiving him, for he has pierced through more subtle snares. His clear insight enabled him at once to discover the baseness of his heart. Coming to accuse you, he betrayed himself, and by the even-handed justice of supreme equity discovered himself to be a notorious rascal, of whom, under another name, the king had already received information. His life is a long list of dark deeds, and would fill volumes. Our king, in a word, abhorring his base ingratitude and dishonesty towards you, has added it to his other crimes, and has placed me under his orders only to see how far his impudence would carry him, and to oblige him to give you full satisfaction. Yes, he has ordered me to take away from him, before you, all the documents he says he has of yours. He annuls, by his sovereign will, the terms of the contract by which you give him your property. He moreover forgives you this secret offence in which you were involved by the flight of your friend. This to reward the zeal which you once showed for him in maintaining his rights, and to prove that his heart, when it is least expected, knows how to recompense a good action. Merit with him is never lost, and he remembers good better than evil.

DOR. Heaven be thanked!

PER. Ah! I breathe again.

EL. What a favourable end to our troubles!

MAR. Who would have foretold it?

ORG. (*to* TARTUFFE, *as the Officer leads him off*). Ah! wretch, now you are . . . .

SCENE VIII.—MADAME PERNELLE, ORGON, ELMIRE, MARIANNE, CLÉANTE, VALÈRE, DAMIS, DORINE.

CLE. Ah! brother, forbear, and do not descend to abuse. Leave the wretch to his evil destiny, and do not add to the remorse that crushes him. Better hope that his heart will now, by a happy change, become virtuous; and that, reforming his life through the detestation of his crimes, he may soften the justice of our glorious king; while you must go and thank him on your knees for his goodness and leniency to you.

ORG. Yes, you are right; let us, with joy, throw ourselves at his feet, and praise the goodness he shows towards us. Then, having acquitted ourselves of this first duty, let us think of another, and by a happy wedding crown in Valère the ardour of a generous and sincere lover.

AMPHITRYON.

(AMPHITRYON.)

The subject of Amphitryon has been treated by Euripides and Archippus, and also by Plautus. Rotrou, before Molière, had given also a free imitation of Plautus in the 'Deux Sosies,' and Molière borrowed from all. According to most critics, however, his 'Amphitryon' is far superior to that of Rotrou or that of Plautus. It was written entirely to amuse, and the sparkling wit and humour throughout the piece are well calculated to answer this end. The versification is delightful; no play of Molière loses more by translation.

It was acted for the first time at the Palais Royal, on the 13th of January, 1668, and had great success.

Molière acted the part of Sosia.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

PROLOGUE.

MERCURY.

NIGHT.

JUPITER, *in the form of* AMPHITRYON.

MERCURY, *in the form of* SOSIA.

AMPHITRYON, *General of the Thebans.*

ARGOTIPHONTIDAS,
NAUCRATES,
POLIDAS,
PAUSICLES,
} *Theban Captains.*

SOSIA, *servant to* AMPHITRYON.

ALCMENA, AMPHITRYON'S *wife.*

CLEANTHIS, ALCMENA'S *waiting-woman, wife to* SOSIA.

The scene is at Thebes, before AMPHITRYON'S *house.*

PROLOGUE.

MERCURY *on a cloud;* NIGHT *drawn through the air by two horses.*

MER. Gently, charming Night, kindly. We have a certain favour to ask of you, and I come from Jupiter to tell you a few words.

NIGHT. Ah! ah! Is that you, my Lord Mercury? Who would ever have dreamt of meeting you resting after such a fashion?

MER. Truly, weary, and unable to fulfil all Jupiter's commands, I comfortably sat on this cloud to wait for your arrival.

NIGHT. Fie! Mercury, is it right for a god to say that he feels tired?

MER. Are gods made of iron?

NIGHT. Nay. But they should never forget divine decorum. There are certain words which lower the sublime attributes; and we leave them to men because of their being undignified.

MER. It is easy for you to say so, fair one, you who have a chariot with two good horses to take you wherever you please. But it is very different with me, and when I think over my fatal destiny I cannot be too angry with the poets for their extreme impertinence. Why, in their unjust law, which no one will set aside, have they given a special conveyance to each god according to his occupation, and left me alone to go on foot like a village messenger? I, who am, as is well known, the far-renowned messenger of the gods in the skies and on the earth, and who, in

simple truth, with all the commands that are laid on me, stand more in need of the means of travelling about than anyone else.

NIGHT. But how can this be helped? Poets do as they like, and it is not the only stupid thing we have seen those gentlemen commit. But, after all, you are angry with them without a cause, for are not the wings which adorn your feet due to their care?

MER. No doubt. But do we get less tired when we go quickly?

NIGHT. Well, let us leave this matter, Mercury, and tell me what brings you here.

MER. Jupiter's will, as I have already told you. He wants the favour of your dark veil for a certain adventure where a new love calls him. His intrigues, I know, are nothing new to you. We often see him neglect the skies for the earth, and you are not ignorant that this master of the gods is fond of humanising himself for mortal beauties, and that he knows a hundred clever tricks to reduce the most cruel. He has fallen in love with Alcmena; and while Amphitryon her spouse commands the armies in Bœotia's plains, Jupiter has assumed his form, and under this disguise relieves his troubles in the enjoyment of the sweetest pleasures. The condition of the wedded pair is propitious to his passion; they have only been united a few days, and the ardour of their youthful love prompted Jupiter to have recourse to this artifice. He is most successful here in his stratagem, but with many a cherished fair such a disguise would prove a failure; it is not always the form of a husband that would give pleasure.

NIGHT. I wonder at Jupiter, and do not understand how he can think of so many disguises.

MER. He wants to taste all sorts of conditions; and he does not at all act like a stupid god. Whatever view of his rank mortals may take, I should consider him most miserable, if he never forsook his redoubtable mien, but ever kept stern in the highest heavens. To my mind there is nothing so irksome as to be always bound to one's greatness; and greatness is particularly opposed to the transports of love. Jupiter, who no doubt understands what pleasure is, condescends to leave the realms of his

splendour; and in order to indulge in what pleases him, he forsakes his own self and ceases to be Jupiter.

NIGHT. I can understand that from this sublime estate he may condescend to enter into that of men, share the emotions which their heart can feel, and accustom himself to their little ways, if in the changes into which he is carried by his disposition he would be satisfied with partaking of the human nature. But to see Jupiter a bull, a swan, or anything of the kind, I do not call right, and I do not wonder that it is sometimes talked about.

MER. Never mind what cavillers say; such changes have charms which they cannot understand. This god knows what he is about as well in this as in anything else, and in the movements of their passions beasts are not so stupid as they seem.

NIGHT. Let us return to the object of his love. If, thanks to his disguise, he has all he wishes, what can he ask besides, and in what way can I serve him?

MER. He asks that the pace of your horses should slacken, in order to satisfy his enamoured heart, that a night so sweet should prove the longest night. That you should leave more time to his happiness, and retard the break of day which is to bring him whose place he has taken.

NIGHT. A truly noble occupation which the great Jupiter asks of me! and a nice name it is that is given to the service he requires!

MER. You are rather simple for so young a goddess! Such an employment has nothing degrading except among low people. Provided you have the happiness of being of high rank, all you do is well and wisely done, and things take their names from what you may be.

NIGHT. You are wiser than I am upon such matters; I shall therefore believe in your higher knowledge and accept the employment.

MER. There, there, Madame Night! gently, if you please. You have in the world the reputation of not being so very particular. You are taken into confidence in a hundred different climes, and I believe, to speak plainly, that we have nothing to reproach each other on that head.

NIGHT. Let us cease this discussion and remain what

we are. Let us give no opportunity to men to laugh at us by telling each other the truth.

MER. Farewell. I am going yonder, and to execute my orders, I shall doff quickly the form of Mercury and take that of Amphitryon's servant.

NIGHT. And I will make a longer stay in this hemisphere with my dark train.

MER. Good morning, Night.

NIGHT. Good-bye, Mercury.

(MERCURY *comes down from the cloud, and* NIGHT *crosses the stage.*)

AMPHITRYON.

ACT I.

Scene I.—Sosia (*alone*).

Who goes there?—Heyday! my fear increases every minute! Gentlemen, you see in me a friend of the whole world. Ah! what boldness in me to walk about at this time of the night! My master, all covered with glory as he is, plays me here but a wretched trick. What! if he had any regard for his neighbour, would he have made me set out on such a dark night as this, and would he not have waited till daybreak, before sending me to announce his return and the particulars of his victory? Ah! Sosia, to what slavery are not your days given up! How much harder is our life with the great than with humbler folk! Everything in nature must be sacrificed to them; day and night, through hail, wind, heat, cold, and danger, at any time and in all kinds of weather, we must fly at their bidding. Twenty years of most devoted service fail to obtain for us the slightest privilege, and at the first whim their wrath comes down upon us. Yet we are so infatuated that we cling to the false honour of belonging to them, and try to feed on the thought, entertained by people about us, that we are happy to bear such chains. In vain does reason call us to retire; in vain, in our vexation, do we at times consent to listen to it; their presence has too great an ascendency over our zeal, and the small favour of a kind look fastens our chain anew.— But in spite of the darkness, I see our house at last, and my fear is vanishing. I

ought to have some ready speech for my embassy. I owe to Alcmena a military sketch of the great fight which drove our enemies away?—But how shall I do it, considering that I was not there? Never mind, let us speak of cut and thrust like an ocular witness. How many people describe battles from which they have kept at a safe distance! To play my part properly, I must just rehearse it a little. Here is the room where I am brought as messenger, and this lantern is Alcmena to whom I have to address myself. (*He puts his lantern on the ground.*) "Madam, Amphitryon my master and your consort," (good! a fine beginning!) "whose mind is always dwelling on your charms, has selected me from amongst all others, to inform you of the success of our arms, and of the longing he has to be near you."—"Ah! truly, my good Sosia, I am delighted to see you again."—"Madam, you do me too much honour, and men will envy my destiny." (Well answered!)—"How fares Amphitryon?"—"Madam, like a man of courage in all engagements where glory calls him." (Very well! a fine thought!)—"When will he make my heart happy by his dear return?"—"As soon as he can, madam; but much later than his heart wishes." (Ah!)—"But in what state has war left him? What does he say? What does he do? Satisfy my heart a little."—"He says less than he does, madam, and makes the enemy tremble." (Dear me! where does my mind find all these pretty sayings!)—"What are the rebels doing? Tell me what has befallen them?"—"They could not resist our shock, madam: we have cut them all to pieces; put Pteralas, their chief, to death; taken Telebos by storm; and already the whole port rings with the news of our valiant deeds."—"Ah! what success! O gods, who would ever have believed it? Tell me, Sosia, how it all happened."—"Willingly, madam; for without boasting I can speak with knowledge of this victory. Fancy then that Telebos, madam, is on this side (Sosia *marks the places on his hand or on the ground*); it is a town really almost as big as Thebes. The river is so to speak there, and here are our people encamped; and that place yonder our enemies occupied. Their infantry was upon an eminence there, and yonder on the right was their cavalry. Prayers were offered to the gods,

orders were passed, the signal given. The enemy, thinking to put us to rout, formed their horse into three platoons; but their courage was soon subdued. You shall see why. Here is our vanguard quite ready for the fight. There the archers of Creon, our king, and here is the body of the army (*a slight noise is heard*) which, first . . . ." Wait, the body of the army is frightened; I believe I hear some noise.

SCENE II.—MERCURY, SOSIA.

MER. (*in the form of* SOSIA, *coming out of* AMPHITRYON'S *house*). Under this shape, which is like his, let us drive away this babbler, whose ill-timed coming would disturb the joy of our lovers.

SO. (*not seeing* MERCURY). My heart is somewhat reassured: I suppose it was nothing, after all; yet for fear of some sad adventure, let us go home and end the talk indoors.

MER. (*aside*). Either you will prove stronger than Mercury, or else he will prevent you from doing so.

SO. (*not seeing* MERCURY). This night will never come to an end. To judge by the time I have been travelling, either my master must have taken evening for morning, or else fair Phœbus has taken too much wine, and is staying in bed in consequence.

MER. (*aside*). With what irreverence the rascal speaks of the gods! My arm will presently chastise this insolence; by and by, I'll also have some glorious fun with him, for I'll rob him of his name as well as of his face.

SO. (*seeing* MERCURY *at a distance*). Ah! I was right, ye gods! It's all over with me, poor weak creature that I am! I see in front of our house a man whose appearance betokens no good. However, to make him believe that I am brave, I'll sing a little song. (*He sings.*)

MER. What rascal is this who takes the liberty of singing and deafening me in that manner? (*As* MERCURY *speaks the voice of* SOSIA *grows weaker and weaker.*) Does he want me to strengthen my hand to thrash him?

SO. (*aside*). This man surely has no taste for music.

MER. For more than a week I have found nobody whose bones I could break. My arm is losing its vigour by

idleness, and I must find some back or other to put me in practice again.

So. (*aside*). What the deuce of a man is this? A mortal fear is spreading through my heart. But yet, why should I tremble? Perhaps he is as afraid as I am, and only talks like that, to hide his fear under a pretended boldness. No, no, I must not allow him to think me a coward; if I am not brave, at least let me put on the appearance of courage, and reason myself into bravery. He is alone as well as I. I am strong; I have a good master, and our house is here at hand.

MER. Who goes there?

So. I.

MER. Who is I?

So. I. (*aside*) Courage, Sosia!

MER. What is your position, tell me?

So. To be a man and to talk.

MER. Are you master or servant?

So. As I have a mind.

MER. Which way are your steps bent?

So. Where I mean to go.

MER. Ah! I do not like this.

So. I am delighted at it.

MER. Positively, either by foul or fair means, I will know from you, villain, what you do, where you come from in this fashion before it is daylight, where you are going, and to whom you belong.

So. I do good and evil by turns, I come from there, I am going there, and I belong to my master.

MER. You have a saucy tongue, and mean to play the man of importance with me. I have half a mind to begin our acquaintance by letting you feel the weight of my hand.

So. Me!

MER. Yes, you; and now my mind is made up (*strikes* SOSIA).

So. Ah! ah! are you in earnest?

MER. No, no; it is all in jest, and to answer your quibbles.

So. Goodness, friend, how free you are with your blows without anyone giving you occasion for it!

MER. Those are the least of what I can do—only my little every-day blows.

SO. If I were as hasty as you are, we should do fine things between us.

MER. All that's nothing; we have many other things to see after yet. But, first of all, let us proceed with our conversation.

SO. I have done with it. (*Tries to go.*)

MER. (*stopping* SOSIA). Where are you going?

SO. What is that to you?

MER. I wish to know.

SO. To have this door opened for me.—Why do you keep me back?

MER. If you have the impudence to go near it, I will shower upon you a storm of blows?

SO. What! You want by your threatening to prevent me from going into our own house?

MER. How! your house?

SO. Yes; our house.

MER. Ah! villain! dare you say that you belong to this house?

SO. Yes. Is it not Amphitryon's house?

MER. Well, and what has that to do with it?

SO. I am his servant.

MER. You?

SO. I.

MER. His servant?

SO. Certainly.

MER. You are the servant of Amphitryon?

SO. Of Amphitryon himself.

MER. Your name is?

SO. Sosia.

MER. Eh! you say?

SO. Sosia.

MER. Listen; do you know that I shall knock your brains out directly?

SO. Why? What fury has taken hold of you?

MER. Where, tell me, have you found the impudence to assume the name of Sosia?

SO. I do not assume it; I have always had it.

MER. What a vile falsehood and what excessive impu-

dence! You dare to persist in saying to my face that your name is Sosia?

So. Yes, I persist for the good reason that the gods, in their supreme power, have willed it so, and that it is not for me to deny it, and be anybody but myself.

MER. A shower of blows must be your reward for such daring impudence.

So. (*beaten by* MERCURY). Justice! citizens! Help! I beseech you!

MER. How, rascal! you cry out!

So. You half murder me, and won't have me cry out?

MER. Thus will my arm . . . .

So. 'Tis not a noble action. You take advantage of my want of courage, and that is not right. It is mere swaggering to profit by the cowardice of those we attack. To beat a man who is sure not to fight is unworthy of a noble soul, and courage is not courage when it's directed against those who have none.

MER. Well, are you still Sosia? What do you say to it?

So. Your beating has not metamorphosed me, and the only change I find is that I am beaten Sosia

MER. (*threatening* SOSIA). Again! Another hundred blows for this fresh impudence.

So. A truce to your blows, I beg.

MER. A truce, then, to your impudence.

So. Be it as you please; I will be silent; the dispute between us is too unequal.

MER. But are you Sosia still? Speak, traitor!

So. Alas! I am anything you like. Dispose of my fate as you please; your arm makes you master of it.

MER. You said your name was Sosia.

So. It is true that until now I thought the thing was certain; but your stick rather makes me think that I was mistaken in the matter.

MER. I am Sosia; all Thebes knows it. Amphitryon never had another Sosia but me.

So. You are Sosia?

MER. Yes, I am Sosia; and, if anyone doubts it, let him take care of himself.

So. (*aside*). Heavens! must I so renounce myself and

see an impostor steal my name from me? How fortunate it is for him that I am a coward! But for that, 'sdeath . . . .

MER. You are muttering, I believe.

SO. No; but, in the name of the gods! give me leave to speak a word to you.

MER. Speak.

SO. Only, pray, promise that you will forbear striking me. Let us sign a truce.

MER. Let it be so; I grant you thus much.

SO. What puts such a whim into your head? Of what use will it be to you to take my name from me? Can you, even were you a devil, make me not be myself, not be Sosia?

MER. (*holding his stick over* SOSIA). What! you can . . . .?

SO. Ah! gently; we have made a truce as to blows.

MER. What! scoundrel! impostor! rascal! . . . .

SO. As for abuse, you can give me as much of that as you please; they are light wounds, and do not hurt me.

MER. You say you are Sosia?

SO. Yes; whatever frivolous tale . . . .

MER. Hold! I break the truce and recall my word.

SO. Let it be so. I cannot annihilate myself for you, and put up with so improbable an assertion. Is it in your power to be what I am? And can I cease to be myself? Was ever such a thing heard of before? And can a multitude of convincing proofs be set aside? Do I dream? Am I asleep? Is my mind disturbed by strong passions? Do I not feel that I am awake? Am I not in my right senses? Has not Amphitryon, my master, sent me in this place to his wife Alcmena? Have I not, whilst speaking of his love, to tell her also of our doings against our enemies? Have I not just arrived from the port? Do I not hold a lantern in my hand? Did I not find you near our house? Am I not here speaking to you in a reasonable manner? Do you not take advantage of my cowardice to prevent me from going into our house? Have you not bent your fury upon me? Have you not soundly thrashed me? Ah! all this is but too true, and would to Heaven it were less so! Leave off insulting a poor wretched mortal, and let me do my duty.

MER. Stay, or the first step will bring down on your back a terrible proof of my just anger. All you have been saying belongs to me, except the blows.

SO. This morning I left our ship, with a heart full of dread, as this lantern knows. Did not Amphitryon despatch me from the camp to his wife Alcmena?

MER. You lie. It is I who was sent by Amphitryon to Alcmena, and I have just arrived from the Persian port. It is I who come to announce the power of his arm, which gave us a complete victory and conquered the chief of our enemies. It is I who for certain am Sosia, the son of Darus, an honest shepherd; brother of Arpagus, who died in a foreign country; husband to the prude Cleanthis, whose temper drives me crazy. It is I who in Thebes have received a thousand lashes without ever having spoken of it to anyone, and who was once publicly marked behind because I was too honest a man.

SO. (*aside*). He is right. And unless he were Sosia, he could not know all he says there. I am seized with wonder, and I really begin to believe him a little. Really, now that I examine him, I see that he has my very shape, face, and manner. I will address him a few questions to clear up this mystery. (*aloud*) Amongst the plunder of our enemies, what did Amphitryon obtain for his share?

MER. Five very large diamonds, beautifully set in a cluster, with which the chief had adorned himself as with a rare piece of work.

SO. For whom does he intend such a rich present?

MER. For his wife; and he wants to see her wear it.

SO. But where, in order that it should be brought here, is it now put?

MER. In a casket sealed with the signet of my master.

SO. (*aside*). Everything he says is quite true, and I am really beginning to doubt my own existence. By dint of beating me, he has shown me that he is Sosia. Perhaps my reason may prove it to me too. Yet, if I touch myself and think of myself, it seems to me that I am still myself. What sure test can I find to make out what puzzles me? What I did alone, and what nobody else saw, unless he be

myself, can't very well be known; I must puzzle him with that question, and it'll confound him; I'll try. (*aloud*) While they were fighting, what did you do in our tents when you ran alone to hide yourself?

MER. From off a ham . . . .

SO. (*aside*). He's got it!

MER. . . . . which I dug up, I bravely cut off two juicy slices, with which I manfully stuffed myself; and adding to it a certain wine carefully kept aside—the very sight of which is light to the eyes—I took a little courage, for our people who were fighting.

SO. (*aside*). This all-convincing proof determines it in his favour; he could not know it, unless by chance he was in the bottle. (*aloud*) I could not deny, after such proofs as these, that you are Sosia, and I yield. But if you are Sosia, tell me who you think me to be; I suppose you won't deny that I am somebody?

MER. When I am no longer Sosia you shall be, if you care for it; but till then, I forbid you such a fancy, on your life.

SO. All this is perplexing to my mind, and reason is contrary to what we see. However, we must end in some way or other, and the shortest for me is to go in.

MER. So you have a taste for . . . .

SO. Ah! what does this mean, ye gods! He strikes still harder, and my back will suffer for more than a whole month. Let us leave this devil of a man, and return to the port. Just heavens! what a pretty embassy I have made! (*Exit.*)

MER. (*alone*). At last I have driven him away, and he is justly punished for many things he has done. But I see Jupiter, to whom the loving Alcmena is bidding farewell very civilly.

SCENE III.—JUPITER (*in the shape of* AMPHITRYON), ALCMENA, CLEANTHIS, MERCURY.

JU. Dear Alcmena, prevent the torches from being brought near; they would, it is true, afford me the delight of beholding your face, but they might also betray my

coming here; and this I must keep secret. My love, restrained by those weighty cares which the glory of our arms claims, has stolen from the duties of my office the few moments it gave to your charms. I might be blamed by the public voice for those stolen moments, and I will have no other witness but her who will thank me for them.

ALC. I share heartily, Amphitryon, in the glory your great deeds bring upon you, and the fame of your victory touches me deeply. But when I see that this fatal honour takes him I love away from me, I cannot, in my extreme fondness, prevent myself from feeling somewhat angry with it, from bearing some ill-will to those who named you the General of the Thebans. It is a pleasant thing to see the man we love exalted after a victory, but many dangers accompany glory, and a fatal blow is, alas! but too quickly received! To what terrible fear our soul is a prey when we hear of the slightest skirmish! How, in the horror of such dread, can we again believe comfort possible, if the threatened blow should come? With whatever laurels a conqueror may be crowned, and whatever share we may have in the honour, is it worth the pangs of a heart threatened every moment with losing what it loves?

JU. Everything that I see in you augments my love; everything shows a heart full of affection; and it is, I must own, a great happiness to find so much tenderness in her I so fondly cherish. But if I dare say so, a scruple troubles my mind; to enjoy thoroughly the tender feelings you show for me, dear Alcmena, my love would owe nothing to your sense of duty, but all to your devotion to my person. I would not that the privilege I have of being your husband should be the cause of your bestowing your favour upon me.

ALC. And yet it is that name which authorizes these favours, and I do not understand this new scruple with which your love is perplexed.

JU. Ah! the depth of the love and tenderness I have for you passes that of a husband's, and you do not know at such moments what is the delicacy of my passion. You cannot conceive how painfully anxious about a hundred trifles is a

heart really smitten, and how uneasy it becomes concerning the manner of being loved. In me, fair and charming Alcmena, you behold a husband and a lover; but I care only for the lover, and I feel near you that the husband disturbs him. The lover, jealous to the last degree of your love, wants your heart to be given to him alone, and his passion will share nothing with the husband. He wants to hold everything from the pure fountain-head of love, and nothing from the tie of marriage; nothing from an irksome sense of duty, which sours the heart, and which every day poisons the best joys. In short, in the scruple he struggles with, he wants you to satisfy his delicacy, that you should separate him from what is offensive to him. Let the husband be for your virtue only, and let the lover have all the love and tenderness of your gentle heart.

ALC. You are laughing, Amphitryon, to talk in such a manner; and I should fear, if anyone heard you, that they would not think you discreet.

JU. What I say is more reasonable than you imagine, Alcmena. But a longer stay would increase the blame for being absent, and I must hurry back to the port. Farewell, the cruel barbarity of my duty tears me from you for awhile; but, fair Alcmena, when you see the husband, think at least of the lover.

ALC. I do not separate what the gods have united, and both lover and husband are to me very dear.

SCENE IV.—CLEANTHIS, MERCURY.

CLE. (*aside*). O heavens! what fond caresses from a dearly loved husband! And how far my rogue is from all such tenderness!

MER. (*aside*). I must tell Night that she has only quickly to unfurl all her sails; the sun may now get up and put the stars out.

CLE. (*stopping* MERCURY). What! is it thus that you leave me?

MER. Why? What do you mean? Must I not do my duty to Amphitryon and follow him?

CLE. You go away thus abruptly from me, deceiver!

MER. A fine subject of vexation, indeed! We have so much time to pass together.

CLE. What! leave me in such a rough way, without saying one soft word of farewell!

MER. Hang it! Where would you have me go and find silly nonsense to regale you with? Fifteen years of marriage exhausts all one's sweet speeches, and for a long time past we have said all we had to say.

CLE. Just look at Amphitryon, you traitor; see how he shows his passion for Alcmena, and blush for the little affection you show your wife.

MER. Ah well, they are still in their honeymoon. After a certain age everything leaves us; and what suits them now would look unseemly in us, an old married couple. It would be, indeed, funny to see us face to face, uttering soft nothings!

CLE. What! you perfidious rascal! am I past the age of having near me one who sighs for me?

MER. Oh no, I do not mean that, but I am too old to sigh sighs, and I should make people burst with laughing.

CLE. Do you deserve, wretch, the signal good fortune of having a virtuous woman for a wife?

MER. Heyday! you are but too virtuous: so much honour does me no good. Be not so honest a wife, and don't deafen me with that tongue of yours.

CLE. What! you blame me for being too virtuous?

MER. All I care for in a woman is gentleness, and your virtue makes a noise which altogether crushes me.

CLE. You want a heart full of false tenderness; one of those talented wives who know how to smother the husband with kisses to make him swallow the lover.

MER. Well, to my mind, an imaginary misfortune grieves none but a fool, and I would take for a device "less virtue and more repose."

CLE. How! Would you bear without any reluctance that I should love a gallant with all freedom?

MER. Yes, if by that means I could have no more of your upbraidings, and that you would alter your ways and your temper. I prefer a convenient vice to an irksome

virtue. Farewell, Cleanthis, dear heart; I must follow Amphitryon.

CLE. (*alone*). Why have I not enough resolution to punish this rascal? Ah! how in such a moment I regret being a virtuous wife.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—AMPHITRYON, SOSIA.

AMP. Come here, you rascal! Do you know, Mr. Scoundrel, that all you say there is enough to make me knock you down, and that I only want a stick to treat you as I wish to do?

SO. If you take it in that way, sir, I have nothing else to say, and you will always be in the right.

AMP. What, traitor! You want to palm such ridiculous stories upon me as true?

SO. No, I am the servant, and you the master; it shall be, sir, just as you please.

AMP. Now, come, I will stifle the anger that is burning within me, and hear you out about your message. Before I see my wife, I must clear up all this mystery. Be composed, consider well, and answer every question word for word.

SO. But for fear of doing wrong, pray tell me beforehand how this business is to be managed. Must I speak, sir, as my conscience dictates, or as men generally speak with the great? Must I say the truth, or only what pleases you?

AMP. No; all I want is a perfectly true account of what has happened.

SO. Very well, then, let me alone; you have only to begin your cross-examination.

AMP. After I had given you the order . . . .

SO. The heavens, veiled with black crape, I set out storming against you for this barbarous treatment, and cursing the order you speak of.

AMP. How, you villain!

So. Sir, you need only say the word, I will tell you lies, if you wish it.

Amp. This is the zeal the servant displays in my service! Very well, pass on. What happened to you by the way?

So. Experiencing a mortal fear before everything I met . . . .

Amp. Coward!

So. In forming us, Nature has her own ideas; she gives us different inclinations. Some find the greatest delight in exposing themselves to danger, and I take pleasure in keeping myself safe.

Amp. Arrived before the house . . . . ?

So. I wished, when before your door, to rehearse a little what I had to say; to see in what tone and in what manner I could relate our glorious exploits.

Amp. What then?

So. Then some one came to disturb and torment me.

Amp. Who was it?

So. Sosia; another I, jealous of your orders, sent by you from the port to Alcmena; and who knows our secrets as well as the I who is now speaking to you.

Amp. What absurd nonsense!

So. No, sir, it is the perfect truth; the other I was at home sooner than this I; and I was there, believe me, before I had arrived.

Amp. Where, I pray you, does all this cursed rubbish come from? Are you dreaming, or drunk? Is it madness, or a paltry joke?

So. No, it is the perfect truth, and no idle story at all. I am a man of honour, sir; I give you my word that it is as I tell you, and you must believe me. I repeat to you, that, imagining I was but one single Sosia, I found we were two at home; and that of those two I's, jealous of each other, one is in the house and the other is with you. That this I, here, worn out with fatigue and travelling, found the other I, hearty and strong, having no other care or anxiety than to beat people and break their bones.

Amp. I must be, it must be acknowledged, of a very calm, composed, and good-natured mind to allow a servant to utter such stupid nonsense before me.

So. If you get angry, I will not speak another word more, let that be understood.

Amp. Well, I will try and listen to you without getting into a rage. But tell me, on your conscience; is there a shadow of likelihood in all that you have been telling me?

So. You are certainly right there, and the thing must appear incredible to everybody. It is a thing impossible to comprehend; an extravagant tale, ridiculous, absurd. It shocks all common sense, and yet it is true.

Amp. How can anybody credit it, unless he is bereaved of his senses?

So. It was not without extreme difficulty that I brought myself to believe it. I felt offended to think that I should be two people, and for a long time I treated myself as an impostor. But at last he forced me to know myself, and I saw that it was I, really I. He is like me from head to foot: handsome, a noble mien, well-shaped, charming manners; in short, two drops of milk are not more alike, and but for his hands, which are rather too heavy, I should be quite satisfied.

Amp. What patience I require! But did you after all go into the house?

So. Go into the house? Ah me! And how? Did I ever listen to reason? And did I not forbid myself the door?

Amp. How? What?

So. With a stick, from which my back suffers still most grievously.

Amp. Did somebody beat you?

So. Yes, indeed.

Amp. But who?

So. I.

Amp. You beat yourself?

So. Yes; not this I, but the other I who is in the house, and who hits like half-a-dozen.

Amp. Confound you for speaking to me in that manner.

So. It is no joke! The I that I met with, has great advantages over the I who is speaking to you; he has a strong arm, great courage; and I received proof of it. This deuced I thrashed me soundly; he is a fellow to do wonders in that line.

AMP. Let's finish. Did you see my wife?

So. No.

AMP. Why?

So. For a very good reason.

AMP. Why! what hindered you, you scoundrel? Speak.

So. Must I repeat the same thing over and over again? It was I, I tell you, that I stronger than I; that I who took possession of the door by force before this I. That I who made me sneak away; that I who wants to be the only I; that I who is jealous of this I: that valiant I whose anger was revealed to this coward I; in short, I who am in the house; I who proved myself my master; I who belaboured myself with stripes.

AMP. He must have lost his wits with drinking too much this morning.

So. Let me be hanged if I have drunk anything but water! I swear it; and you can believe me, when I swear.

AMP. Then you must have fallen asleep, and some perplexing dream has shown you as facts all the idle fancies you are relating to me.

So. No, I did not sleep either, and indeed I have no inclination to do so. I am speaking to you wide awake. Upon my soul, I was wide awake this morning, and wide awake was the other Sosia when he so well dusted my jacket.

AMP. Follow me, and I command you to keep silence; you bewilder my mind too much. It is absurd in me to listen so patiently to the nonsense of a servant.

So. (*aside*). All that a poor obscure man says is nonsense, but the same things in the mouth of a great man are perfect sense.

AMP. Let us go in without more discussion. But here is Alcmena in all her beauty. She does not expect me at this time of day, and my arrival will please her.

SCENE II.—ALCMENA, AMPHITRYON, CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

ALC. (*not seeing* AMPHITRYON). Come, Cleanthis, let us go and offer our vows to the gods for my husband, and thank them for the glorious success which his courage has brought to Thebes. (*seeing* AMPHITRYON) O ye gods!

AMP. May the gods grant that the victorious Amphitryon be received with joy by his wife! May this day be favourable to my passion, may it give you back to me with the same loving heart! Let me find in you as much love as my soul brings back.

ALC. What! returned so soon?

AMP. Truly, you give me but an indifferent proof of your affection, and that "What! returned so soon?" is not, at such a moment, the language of a heart burning with love. I deluded myself with the false hope that I had remained too much away from you. The expectation of a return ardently wished for, makes every moment seem an age; and the absence of one we love, however short it may be, is always too long.

ALC. I do not see . . . .

AMP. No, Alcmena, in such a case time is measured by impatience; and you reckon the moments of absence like one who does not love. When we love truly, the least separation kills us, and those whose sight is dear to us never return too soon. I must say that my warm affection has reason to complain of your welcome, and I expected from your heart other marks of joy and tenderness.

ALC. I can scarcely understand what ground you have for what you are now saying; and if you complain of me, I truly do not know how I can ever satisfy you. Last night, on your return, I think I showed myself happy enough, and I repaid your love with all that you had reason to expect.

AMP. What?

ALC. Did I not show you the sudden transports of a perfect joy? And could a heart better express itself on the return of a husband loved with the greatest tenderness?

AMP. What is it you are saying?

ALC. That even your love was surprised at the welcome I gave you; and as you left me at break of day, I do not see that I am so very guilty at being astonished by your early return.

AMP. Have you, Alcmena, in a dream, anticipated the return I have made with all possible haste? And having treated me kindly in your sleep, does your heart think itself fully acquitted towards me?

ALC. Has some malignant vapour, Amphitryon,* darkened your understanding as to what took place last night? And do you pretend to discuss the reality of the welcome I gave you?

AMP. This vapour you treat me with is, to say the least, rather strange.

ALC. It is a fair exchange for the dream you speak of.

AMP. Unless we suppose it to be a dream, it is impossible to excuse what you are telling me.

ALC. Unless we suppose a vapour to have disturbed your understanding, it is impossible to justify what you are now telling me.

AMP. Let us leave this vapour, Alcmena.

ALC. Let us leave this dream, Amphitryon.

AMP. Alcmena, we cannot jest long on this subject without danger.

ALC. No doubt, and as a proof I begin to feel some uneasiness.

AMP. Is it thus that you try to make up for the sorry welcome of which I complain?

ALC. Do you mean to amuse yourself under such a pretence?

AMP. Forbear, Alcmena, and let us speak seriously.

ALC. Leave off this raillery, Amphitryon; you carry your jesting too far.

AMP. What! you dare to tell me to my face, then, I have been here before now?

ALC. What! you are bold enough to deny that you came here early last night?

AMP. I came here yesterday!

ALC. Certainly, and went away at daybreak.

AMP. (*aside*). Heavens! was ever such a debate heard of before? Who would not be astonished at all this? Sosia!

SO. She is in need of half-a-dozen grains of hellebore, sir; her brain is diseased.†

AMP. Alcmena, in the name of all the gods, recover your senses, and think of what you say; for all this may end badly.

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* Compare 'M. de Pourceaugnac,' Act I. sc xi., &c.

† Compare 'Sganarelle,' vol. i. p. 199.

ALC. I am careful to do so; moreover, everybody here saw you come. I cannot understand what reason you have for acting in such a strange manner; but if the thing had to be proved, if it were possible that you had forgotten all about it, tell me, who else but you could have given me the news of your last battle? Who could have given me the five diamonds worn by Pteralas, who was precipitated into eternal night by the strength of your arm? Are surer witnesses wanted?

AMP. What! I have already given you the cluster of diamonds which I had for my share, and which I intended for you!

ALC. Certainly, it is not difficult to convince you of it.

AMP. And how?

ALC. (*showing the cluster of diamonds at her girdle*). Here it is.

AMP. Sosia!

SO. (*taking a casket out of his pocket*). She is laughing at you, sir; I have it here; all this pretence is of no avail.

AMP. (*looking at the casket*). The seal is perfect.

ALC. (*giving the cluster of diamonds to* AMPHITRYON). Here it is; do you think this proof convincing enough?

AMP. Heaven, O just Heaven!

ALC. Come, Amphitryon, it is unkind of you to act in such a manner, and you ought to be covered with confusion.

AMP. Break open the seal immediately.

SO. (*having opened the casket*). Upon my word the casket is empty. It must have been taken out by witchcraft, or else it came by itself and without guide to find her it was intended to adorn.

AMP. Tell me, O ye gods, whose power overrules everything, the meaning of this, and what my love may not have to fear from it!

SO. (*to* AMPHITRYON). If what she says is true, we share the same fate, and you are double, sir, as well as I.

AMP. Be silent.

ALC. What is there to surprise you so much, and what can give you cause for such fear?

AMP. (*aside*). O gods! what a strange perplexity is

mine! I see incidents which are beyond nature, and my honour fears what my reason refuses to believe.

ALC. Will you still persist in denying your quick return when you have such tangible proofs of it?

AMP. No; but kindly relate to me, if you can, all that took place on this return.

ALC. Since you ask me for an account, I suppose you mean to imply that it was not you?

AMP. I do not say that; but I have a certain reason for wishing to hear it.

ALC. Have the important cares to which you give yourself, driven it all away from your memory?

AMP. Perhaps. But you would give me great pleasure if you would tell me the whole story.

ALC. The story is not long. I advanced towards you pleased with so delightful a surprise, and kissed you tenderly and showed my joy again and again.

AMP. (*aside*). Ah! I could have done without such a warm welcome.

ALC. Then you gave me this beautiful present which you had reserved for me out of the spoil of the enemy. You displayed to me all the violence of your love; you spoke of the cares which had kept you away from me; of your happiness at seeing me again; of the tortures of absence; of all that your impatience had devised to hasten your return; and never did your love on like occasions seem to me so tender and so passionate.

AMP. (*aside*). Can one suffer more!

ALC. All these transports, all this tenderness, as you may conceive, did not displease me; and if I must speak the truth, my heart, Amphitryon, found the utmost delight in it.

AMP. And after, pray?

ALC. We talked away together about all that concerns us both. The table was laid. We had supper alone, and then we retired.

AMP. Together?

ALC. Certainly; why such a question?

AMP. (*aside*). Ah! this is the most cruel blow, and this it is which I trembled to hear.

ALC. Why do you blush at that word? Did I do wrong?

AMP. No, it was not I; and great is my grief. Whoever said that I was here yesterday says the most abominable of falsehoods.

ALC. Amphitryon!

AMP. Faithless woman!

ALC. Ah! what fury is this?

AMP. No, no; no more endearment, no more respect; this injury puts an end to all my forbearance. My heart in this fatal moment breathes only fury and revenge.

ALC. Revenge! and on whom? Where have I failed in my duty, that you should treat me like a criminal?

AMP. I do not know; but it was not I; and in my despair I can do anything.

ALC. Away, unworthy husband; the action speaks of itself. You wrong me too much in accusing me of infidelity. If all this is a pretence to break the ties that bind me to you, you take useless trouble, and I am determined even to day to be separated from you.

AMP. After such a base injury, this is the least for which you must prepare, and perhaps things may not stop there. The dishonour is certain and my misfortune visible. Although the details still escape me, my love in vain tries to disguise it. Your brother can positively affirm that I did not leave him till this morning. I will fetch him, and will shame you by proving to you how false is the return you impute to me. Afterwards we will try to clear up this mystery, and, in the fury of my just wrath, woe to him who has betrayed me!

SO. Sir . . . .

AMP. Do not accompany me; stop here and wait for my return.

CLE. (*to* ALCMENA). Must you . . . .

ALC. I will hear nothing; leave me alone, and do not follow me.

SCENE III.—CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

CLE. (*aside*). Something must have turned his head: but the brother will soon be here, and will put an end to this quarrelling.

SO. (*aside*). This is a sad blow to my master, and his

fate is cruel; I terribly fear something of the same kind for myself, and I must gently draw it out of her.

CLE. (*aside*). Will he so much as come to speak to me? —But I must not seem to care for it.

SO. (*aside*). Such things are unpleasant, and I hesitate to ask any questions; would it not be better to run no risk and to remain ignorant of how the matter stands? Never mind, I'll try, come what may. I can't help myself. It is a weakness in us human beings to be anxious to discover what we fain would not know. The gods keep thee, Cleanthis.

CLE. Ah, you traitor, you dare to come near me!

SO. Why! what is the matter with you? You are always angry, and always ready to fire up for nothing!

CLE. What do you call for nothing? Eh?

SO. I call "for nothing" what we call "for nothing" in verse as well as in prose; and "nothing," as you know, means "nothing" or "very little."

CLE. I do not know what keeps me, you rascal, from tearing your eyes out, and from teaching you what the anger of a woman is.

SO. Alas! why put yourself in such a violent rage?

CLE. You call nothing, I suppose, your late proceedings with me?

SO. What proceedings?

CLE. What! you act the innocent? Will you follow the example of your master, and say that you did not return yesterday? You left me with words full of contempt.

SO. Well done, Sosia!

CLE. What! that's how you listen to my complaint! You laugh at your fine doings.

SO. How pleased I am with myself!

CLE. That's the way you express your sorrow for your outrage?

SO. I should never have believed that I was so discreet.

CLE. Instead of expressing regret at such an insult, you feel nothing but joy!

SO. Gently, gently; I have my reasons for looking pleased; and, without thinking of it, I never did a better thing than when I behaved to you in that manner.

CLE. Deceiver! you are laughing at me!

So. No, I am speaking sincerely. What you tell me has delighted me; I was afraid that, in the state I was in, I had played the fool with you.

Cle. Why this fear? Let us know what it means.

So. The doctors say that when one is drunk we can only have dull and heavy children who cannot live; consider what troubles might have come if I had not had strength enough to be cold.

Cle. A fig for the doctors and their insipid reasonings. Let them lay down rules for those who are ill, and leave healthy people to govern themselves. It's rather too much interference on their part to wish to set bounds to our pure love; and not only to bring forward their dog-days, but to give us with their strict rules a hundred cock-and-bull stories.

So. Gently.

Cle. No, I maintain that their conclusions are worthless, and that all their reasons are the reasons of idiots. There is neither wine nor season that can bring ill-luck, and all doctors are asses.

So. Pray moderate your anger against them; they are honest people, whatever the world may say.

Cle. No, I do not believe you, and you may draw in your horns; your excuse won't go down; and I'll be avenged sooner or later for the contempt you showed me. I have not forgotten what you said this morning. I will try and make use, you coward faithless husband, of the liberty you gave me.

So. What liberty?

Cle. You told me this morning, rascal, that you consented heartily to my loving another.

So. Ah! this time I am in the wrong, and I unsay it. Our honour is at stake. Mind you don't follow it up.

Cle. Yet, if once I can master my own feelings . . . .

So. Just stop talking a little, I see Amphitryon coming; he seems pleased.

Scene IV.—Jupiter, Cleanthis, Sosia.

Ju. (*aside*). I will just take the opportunity of calming Alcmena, of banishing sorrow from her heart, and of

gratifying my love with the sweet pleasure of a reconciliation. (*to* CLEANTHIS) Alcmena is upstairs, is she not?

CLE. Yes, full of grief; and she wishes to be left alone. She forbade me to follow her.

JU. Whatever her orders, they do not extend to me.

SCENE V.—CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

CLE. His sorrow, I see, did not last long.

SO. What do you say, Cleanthis, of these happy looks after his terrible rage?

CLE. That if the women were wise, they would send all men to the devil, for the best of them are good for nothing.

SO. That is easy when you are angry, but you are too fond of us, and you would feel terribly taken in, if the devil were to do away with us.

CLE. Really . . . .

SO. Here they are; let us be silent.

SCENE VI.—JUPITER, ALCMENA, CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

JU. Alas! will you drive me to despair? Stop a moment, fair Alcmena.

ALC. No, I cannot stay with him who caused my grief.

JU. Pray!

ALC. Leave me.

JU. What!

ALC. Leave me alone, I tell you.

JU. (*aside*). Her tears touch my soul and her grief afflicts me. (*aloud*) Allow my heart to . . . .

ALC. No, do not follow me.

JU. Whither will you go?

ALC. Wherever you are not.

JU. That is a vain attempt: I am too much captivated by your beauty to suffer a moment's separation from you. I will follow you everywhere, Alcmena.

ALC. And I will everywhere avoid you.

JU. Am I so frightful?

ALC. More than can be expressed. I see in you a

cruel and furious monster whose approach is to be dreaded; a monster to be everywhere avoided. My heart suffers inexpressible anguish at the sight of you; it is torture to me, and there is nothing under the heavens so frightful, horrible, and odious, that I would not rather see than you.

JU. Alas! this is a great deal to say to me.

ALC. I have a great deal more in my heart, and language fails to express all I feel.

JU. In what has my love sinned against you, Alcmena, that you should look upon me as a monster?

ALC. Ah! just Heaven! do you ask it? Is it not enough to drive me to despair?

JU. Ah! with a softened heart . . . .

ALC. No, I will neither see nor hear you.

JU. Can you treat me so, cruel one? Is this that tender love which yesterday you said would last for ever?

ALC. No, no. That love so tender, so passionate, no longer exists; your base insults have destroyed it. You have killed it in my heart by your cruel wounds. In its place you will find an inexorable wrath, a keen resentment, an invincible indignation, the despair of a heart justly incensed and resolved to hate you for so grievous an injury, as much as it once loved you; and this is to hate as much as possible.

JU. Alas! your love had but little strength, if this was enough to destroy it! Can a jest make you renounce it, and give rise to such bitter wrath?

ALC. Ah! it is this which offends me, it is this which my anger cannot forgive. I should feel less hurt if you had wronged me through jealousy; its strength is often beyond our control, and no doubt at times it is difficult to the wisest to find any reason for what he feels. The wrath of a heart labouring under its delusions bears within itself its own justification. In the love that gives it birth are found reasons to urge against our resentment. To excuse its violence it has love, and we easily forgive an uncontrollable passion. But to wantonly give way to an excess of fury, and without a cause to wound the fondness and honour of one who loves you dearly,

ah! this is too cruel a blow, and my grief can never forget it.

JU. You are right, Alcmena, this action is certainly odious; I will not pretend to justify it. Yet allow my heart to take its own defence, and show you who is to blame for this insulting fury. To tell you the truth, Alcmena, the husband has done the wrong, and he alone is to blame. The lover has had no share in his coarse anger, and he is incapable of offending you; he has too much tenderness and affection for you, and, had he been guilty of such weakness, you would see him die before your eyes. But the husband has thrown off that deep respect which he should always retain for you; he has thought everything to be his right because he is your husband. Yes, it is certainly the husband who is guilty. He only has ill-used your lovely person; hate, detest that husband, I consent to it, I give him up to you; but, Alcmena, do not include the lover in the wrath which such an offence raises in your heart. Do not make him suffer; distinguish the innocent from the guilty, and, in order to be just, do not punish him for what he did not do.

ALC. Alas! all these subtleties are but frivolous excuses, and mere folly to a heart justly incensed. In vain do you employ such ridiculous evasions. I make no distinction in him who offends me, everything is alike the object of my just anger; the husband and lover are one. Both occupy my thoughts, both show themselves in the same colours before my offended eyes, both have injured me, both are guilty, and both are odious to me.

JU. Well, I take the offence upon myself, since it must be so. Yes, you are right to sacrifice me as a guilty victim to your resentment. A just displeasure animates you against me, and I but deserve your wrath. I do not wonder that you should shun me, and that in your anger you threaten to fly from me. I must appear detestable to you, and you are right in execrating me. There is no crime so dark as that of having offended you; both gods and men are insulted by it, and I deserve as punishment for such insolence to see all your hatred poured upon me. But my heart begs forgiveness of you; I ask it on my knees, in the name of the tenderest love that a soul

can ever feel. If your heart, fair Alcmena, refuses the forgiveness I implore of you, a sudden death must deliver me from the anguish I cannot endure. Yes, this state of things drives me to despair. Alcmena, do not presume that, loving you as I do, I can live one single day under your displeasure; my sorrowful heart already sinks under the torturing length of these moments, and the cruel wounds of a thousand vultures cannot be compared to my terrible suffering. You have but to tell me, Alcmena, if I cannot hope for forgiveness, and this sword will in one moment pierce the heart of the most unfortunate of men—this heart, this treacherous heart but too deserving of death, since it has offended you; happy when descending to the gloomy abodes, if my death makes you forget your anger, and leaves no impression of hatred mixed with the remembrance of my love! This is the last favour I ask.

ALC. Ah, too cruel husband!

JU. Speak, Alcmena.

ALC. How can I still feel any kindness for you when you outrage me by so many insults?

JU. Whatever resentment an injury occasions, can it resist the remorse of a truly loving heart?

ALC. A heart full of love would expose itself to a thousand deaths, rather than pain the object of that love.

JU. The more we love, the less difficult we find . . . .

ALC. No, do not speak to me; you deserve my hatred.

JU. You hate me, then?

ALC. I try, and it pains me to see that your great offence cannot even carry my vengeance so far as to hate you.

JU. But why this violence, since, to avenge you, I offer to die? Pronounce the sentence, and it shall be done.

ALC. I cannot hate you, and can I wish you to die?

JU. And I cannot live unless you forego the anger which crushes me, and unless you grant me the forgiveness which I beg for at your feet. (SOSIA *and* CLEANTHIS *kneel down also.*) Choose and decide; either punish or forgive.

ALC. Alas! what I decide shows itself but too easily. I cannot keep up the resentment I feel, and my heart has betrayed me. To say that we cannot hate, does it not mean that we forgive?

JU. Ah! charming Alcmena, I must in my delight ....

ALC. No, I am angry with myself for my great weakness.

JU. Go on, Sosia; make haste. I am beyond myself with joy! Go and fetch all the officers of the army you can find, and ask them to come and have dinner with me. (*aside*) Whilst I send him away from here, Mercury will fill his post.

SCENE VII.—CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

SO. Well, you see these lovers, Cleanthis: shall we follow their example, and make peace also; some little patching up?

CLE. Don't you wish you may get it? You think the thing can be done so, do you?

SO. What! You won't?

CLE. No.

SO. I don't care. So much the worse for you.

CLE. There, there; come back!

SO. No, hang it! I won't, and I'll be angry in my turn.

CLE. Go, go, deceiver! let me alone; one gets sometimes tired of being virtuous.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—AMPHITRYON (*alone*).

Fate must purposely hide him from me! I am weary at last of running after him. I do not think there can be a more cruel destiny. Go wherever I will, I fail to find the man I am hunting after, and meet, instead, all those I wish to avoid. A thousand wearisome bores who hardly know me, and with no idea that they are bores, come to rejoice with me over our victories. To the cruel perplexity of my heart they add their congratulations and embraces. In vain do I try to escape from their persecutions; their crushing friendship stops me on every

side; and whilst with a gesture I answer their protestations of love, inwardly I curse them. Ah! what little pleasure there is in praise, glory, and all a glorious victory brings, when our heart is suffering from a great grief! and how willingly we would give up all this glory in exchange for peace of mind! Jealousy, every moment, reminds me of my disgrace; and, the more I think of it, the less am I able to clear up this fatal mystery. I am not surprised at the stealing of the diamonds: there are ways of opening seals without leaving any trace; but that she should say that I made her the present myself is to me a cruel difficulty. Nature has sometimes produced resemblances which impostors have made use of; but it is impossible to suppose that a man should make himself pass for a husband by means of such a resemblance, for there are a thousand differences which a wife would soon discover. The wonderful effects of Thessalian charms have at all times been boasted of, but I have always thought the marvellous things related to be idle tales; and it would be hard if, when returning from a great victory, I were forced to believe in them at the expense of my own honour. I must question her again upon this distressing mystery, and see if it is not some strange delusion which has taken hold of her troubled mind. Ah! may the just Heavens grant that this may be the real explanation, and that for my happiness she may have lost her senses.

SCENE II.—MERCURY, AMPHITRYON.

MER. (*on the balcony of* AMPHITRYON'S *house, without being seen or heard by* AMPHITRYON). Since love offers me no pleasure here, I will create diversion for myself of another kind, and cheer up my dull leisure by teasing Amphitryon. It is not exactly what a god full of charity would do; but charity is the last thing I think about, and I am, thanks to my planet, rather inclined to be mischievous.

AMP. How is it the door is shut at this time of day?

MER. Ho! softly. Who's that knocking?

AMP. (*not seeing* MERCURY). I.

MER. Who's I?

AMP. (*seeing* MERCURY, *whom he takes for* SOSIA). Open the door.

MER. How! open the door! Who are you, making so much noise, and speaking after such a fashion?

AMP. What! don't you know me?

MER. No; nor have I the least wish to know you.

AMP. (*aside*). Has everybody gone crazy to-day? there is madness in the air. Sosia! I say, Sosia!

MER. Well! what about Sosia? That's my name; are you afraid of my forgetting it?

AMP. Do you not see me?

MER. I see you very well. What can possess you to make such a row? and what is it you want down there?

AMP. What do I want, you rascal?

MER. What don't you want, then? Speak, if you wish to be heard.

AMP. Wait a moment, you scoundrel! I'll soon with the help of a stick make you hear me, and teach you also to dare to speak to me in this manner.

MER. Gently! If you persist in knocking again, I'll send you some troublesome missiles from up here.

AMP. Heavens! was ever such insolence heard of? Can it be conceived in a servant, a beggar!

MER. Well! what is the matter? Have you examined me sufficiently? Have you stared at me enough with your big eyes?—How he opens them! How wild he seems! If looks could bite, he would have torn me to pieces before now.

AMP. I tremble at what you will bring upon yourself with these impudent answers. What a terrible storm you are preparing for yourself, what showers of blows will fall on your back!

MER. I say, friend, if you do not leave this place, you may chance to meet with a bruise or two.

AMP. Ah! you shall know to your confusion what it is for a valet to insult his master.

MER. You, my master?

AMP. Yes, scoundrel! dare you disown me?

MER. I have no other master but Amphitryon.

AMP. And who is this Amphitryon but myself?

MER. You Amphitryon?

AMP. Certainly!

MER. Ah! what a delusion! I say, tell me, in what honest tavern have you been muddling your brains?

AMP. What! again?

MER. Was it a wine to drink much of?

AMP. O ye gods!

MER. Was it old or new?

AMP. What insults!

MER. New wine is very heady when you drink it without water.

AMP. Ah! I'll cut out that tongue of yours.

MER. Pass on, my poor friend, believe me; nobody minds you here. I respect wine. Get along, go about your business, and leave Amphitryon to enjoy his pleasure.

AMP. What! is Amphitryon in there?

MER. Of course; crowned with the laurels of complete victory, he is near the fair Alcmena, enjoying a pleasant talk. After a whimsical love quarrel, they taste the happiness of a reconciliation. Be careful not to disturb their sweet moments, if you do not wish to be punished for your rash imprudence. (*Exit.*)

SCENE III.—AMPHITRYON (*alone*).

Ah! what a blow he has given me! In what a cruel anxiety my mind is plunged! And if things are as the scoundrel says, what am I to think of my honour and my love? What decision must I take? Must I speak or be silent? Must I, in my wrath, conceal or spread abroad the dishonour of my family? Ah! can one have any hesitation after such gross insults? No; I have nothing to hope for. My only anxiety must be how best to revenge myself.

SCENE IV.—AMPHITRYON, SOSIA; NAUCRATES *and* POLIDAS (*at the farther end of the stage*).

SO. Sir, in spite of all my diligence, I could only bring you these two gentlemen.

AMP. Oh! you are there!

SO. Sir!

AMP. Impudent rascal! Scoundrel!

SO. How? What?

AMP. I will teach you how to speak to me.

SO. What is the matter? what ails you?

AMP. (*drawing his sword*). What ails me, wretch?

SO. (*to* NAUCRATES *and* POLIDAS). Help, gentlemen! Come here, I beseech you.

NAU. (*to* AMPHITRYON). Hold! I beg.

SO. What have I done?

AMP. You dare ask, you scoundrel? (*to* NAUCRATES) Leave me to satisfy my just wrath.

SO. When a man is to be hanged, he is at least told why.

NAU. Tell us what crime he has committed.

SO. Gentlemen, do not give me up, I pray.

AMP. How! He has just shut the door in my face, threatened me, and used the vilest language! (*going to strike him*) Wretch!

SO. (*falling on his knees*). I am dead.

NAU. (*to* AMPHITRYON). Pray be composed.

SO. Gentlemen!

POL. (*to* SOSIA). What is it you want?

SO. Has he struck me?

AMP. He must be rewarded for the insults he has just been using to me.

SO. How can I have done such a thing when I was fulfilling your orders elsewhere? These gentlemen can bear me witness that I went to fetch them to dine with you.

NAU. It is quite true that he came to us with this message, and that he has not left us since.

AMP. Who gave you that order?

SO. Yourself!

AMP. How? When?

SO. After you had made your peace with Alcmena —in the midst of your happiness at having pacified her. (SOSIA *gets up.*)

AMP. O heavens! Each moment, each step adds to my misery, and in this cruel dilemma I do not know what to believe, nor what to say.

NAU. All he has been telling us of what happened in

your house seems so very wonderful, that before you do anything, or give way to passion, you must try to clear up the matter.

AMP. Yes; let us do so. You will help me in my endeavour. Heaven sends you here for this purpose. Let us see what fortune has in reserve for me. We will unravel this mystery, and know my fate. I am impatient to know the truth, and yet, alas! I fear it more than death.

SCENE V.—JUPITER, AMPHITRYON, NAUCRATES, POLIDAS, SOSIA.

JU. What noise is this which forces me to come down? and who is it that knocks as if he were master where I am?

AMP. Ye just gods! What do I see?

NAU. Heaven! What prodigy is this? What! Two Amphitryons are here before us!

AMP. (*aside*). My senses are paralysed! Alas! I hardly know where I am; this is the end then; my destiny is plain enough, and what I see tells me everything.

NAU. The more I compare them, the more I find them alike.

SO. (*passing to the side of* JUPITER). Gentlemen, this is the true Amphitryon; the other is the guilty one, and worthy of chastisement.

POL. The resemblance is truly marvellous, and I am at a loss what to say.

AMP. We have been deceived too long by a detestable impostor; this sword will break the charm.

NAU. (*to* AMPHITRYON, *who has drawn his sword*). Hold!

AMP. Unhand me!

NAU. Heavens! What would you do?

AMP. Punish the vile treachery of a cowardly knave.

JU. Gently, gently! your wrath is sadly out of season; when we thus give way to passion, we make people think that our arguments are bad.

SO. He is a magician, and bears about him a spell to make himself resemble the master of every house.

AMP. (*to* SOSIA). I will punish you for these outrageous insults.

So. My master is a man of courage, and will not allow his servant to be beaten.

AMP. Allow me, in the height of my rage, to wash the insult away in the blood of the miscreant.

NAU. (*stopping* AMPHITRYON). We will not allow this strange fight of Amphitryon against himself.

AMP. What! is this the treatment my honour receives at your hands? My friends side with the villain who insults me! Not only do they not take up my revenge, but they prevent me from avenging myself!

NAU. What can we decide before this strange sight, when between two Amphitryons our friendship must remain in suspense? If we show our zeal for you, we are afraid of doing wrong. We see in you, it is true, Amphitryon the glorious chief of the Thebans; but there he is also before us, and we cannot decide which is the true one. Our duty is not doubtful, and the impostor must perish; but this perfect resemblance conceals him, and it is hazarding too much to do you justice before inquiring into the matter. Leave us to decide with calm judgment on which side the deceit lies; as soon as we are clear on that point, there will be no need of telling us our duty.

JU. Yes, you are right, and this resemblance justifies your hesitation. I do not feel offended at your hesitation. I am more reasonable, and can excuse you. It is impossible for the eye to distinguish any difference between us. I see that one can be easily deceived. You do not see me fly off in a passion, and draw my sword; it is a wrong way of clearing up this mystery. I can find one more pleasant and more sure. One of us two is Amphitryon, although we both may seem to be so in your eyes; it is for me to end this discussion, and I intend to make myself so well known to all, that before the undeniable proofs of what I am, he himself will have to acknowledge it, and cease all hesitation. It is to the Thebans that I wish to make the truth known. The thing is important enough to require to be said publicly. Alcmena expects this testimony from me; her virtue, injured by this open scandal, demands justification. I will see that it is given. My love for her requires this at my hand, and I have called together the noblest chiefs to make before them the

discovery which is due to her reputation. Whilst we wait for those distinguished guests, pray come and do honour to the table to which Sosia has invited you.

So. I was not mistaken, gentlemen: this invitation puts a stop to all dispute: the true Amphitryon is the Amphitryon who gives a dinner.

Amp. Ye gods! Can I be more humbled? What! must I listen to all that this impostor is pleased to say; and, in spite of the fury with which I feel justly incensed, must I be prevented from punishing him?

Nau. (*to* Amphitryon). You complain unjustly. Allow us to await the disclosures which are to set us free to act. I know not if he imposes upon us, but he speaks on the matter as if he were right.

Amp. Go, treacherous friends, and flatter the impostor. I shall find others in Thebes, who, feeling for my injury, will lend a hand to my just resentment.

Ju. Very well, I will expect them, and end the discussion in their presence.

Amp. You think thus to escape, villain! but nothing will save you from my revenge.

Ju. I will not, for the present, condescend to answer your insulting language; ere long I will, with a couple of words, make your anger cease.

Amp. Heaven, no, not Heaven itself could shelter you; I will track your steps even to the very gates of hell.

Ju. That will not be necessary; you will soon see that I have no intention of running away.

Amp. (*aside*). I shall go; I shall haste away to friends who will take my dishonour to heart; I will return accompanied by them, and with a strong hand punish the impostor.

Scene VI.—Jupiter, Naucrates, Polidas, Sosia.

Ju. Make no ceremony, I pray you, come into the house with me.

Nau. How strangely this adventure confounds my judgment and reason.

So. A truce, gentlemen, to all your doubts; sit cheerfully down to table till to-morrow. (*aside*) With what

joy I will set to, and take strength to relate all our grand doings; I am impatient to begin. I never was so hungry in my life.

Scene VII.—Mercury, Sosia.

Mer. Stop! What! You dare to poke your nose in here, you impudent kitchen sponger!

So. Ah! gently, pray!

Mer. Ah! you're at it again. I'll lace your jacket for you.

So. Alas! brave and generous I, compose yourself, I pray you. Sosia, spare Sosia a little, I beg; and do not thus delight in beating yourself.

Mer. Who gave you leave to call yourself by that name? Have I not expressly forbidden you to do so, upon pain of a good cudgelling?

So. It's a name we both can have at the same time under the same master. Everybody knows me everywhere for Sosia; I agree that you, too, should be Sosia; allow me to be so likewise. Let us leave the two Amphitryons to quarrel and be jealous, and in the midst of their discussions let us, the two Sosias, live in peace.

Mer. No; one is enough, and I am determined not to share with anybody.

So. I will give you the precedence. You shall be the elder, I the younger.

Mer. No; it's tiresome to have a brother. I will be an only son.

So. Oh, how hardhearted and tyrannical! Allow me at least to become your shadow?

Mer. No!

So. Suffer your heart to show a little pity; let me stay near you in that character. I will always be such a submissive shadow, that you will be pleased with me.

Mer. No quarter; the law cannot be broken. If you take it into your head to go in there, beware of your back

So. Alas! to what a strange misfortune are you reduced, O Sosia!

Mer. What! your mouth dares to call yourself by a name I forbid you to take?

So. No; it was not I, that I meant; I speak of an old Sosia who once was one of my relations, who was once driven away from here, just at dinner-time.

Mer. Take care you do not renew the offence, if you wish to be numbered among the living.

So. (*aside*). I would beat you, if I were brave, you proud son of a . . . .

Mer. What is it you say?

So. Nothing.

Mer. You are speaking of some one, I think.

So. Oh dear, no; I never said a word.

Mer. A certain appellation, "son of a . . . .," struck my ear, however; nothing can be more certain.

So. It must be a parrot that the fine weather has revived.

Mer. Good-bye; when you want a good thrashing, it is here that I live.

So. (*alone*). O ye gods! What a cursed hour the dinner hour is, when we are driven away! Well, I must yield to my sorrowful fate; let us follow to-day its blind caprices, and by a just union join the unhappy Sosia to the unhappy Amphitryon. I see him coming with his friends.

Scene VIII.—Amphitryon, Argotiphontidas, Pausicles; Sosia (*at the end of the stage, not seen*).

Amp. (*to those who are with him*). Stay here, gentlemen; follow at a distance, and only advance altogether when the moment comes.

Pau. I understand what this blow must be to you.

Amp. Ah! my grief is altogether terrible! And I suffer in my love as much as in my honour.

Pau. If this resemblance is as it is said, Alcmena without being guilty . . . .

Amp. No; in such a matter the slightest mistake becomes a crime, and innocence is at an end, even without having consented to it. Such errors, in whatever light they are placed, touch us in our most sensitive parts, and reason often forgives where honour and love cannot.

Arg. I do not perplex my thoughts about that; but I hate men who give way to scandalous dilatory measures;

it wounds my soul to the quick, and never will people of courage approve of it. When anyone requires our aid, we ought to espouse his quarrel thoroughly. Argotiphontidas does not stop to make up excuses. To listen to the reasonings of a friend's adversary is not the action of a man of honour; revenge is the only thing to listen to. I do not like argument, and we should always begin a quarrel by running a man through the body. Yes, you will see, whatever may happen, that Argotiphontidas goes straight ahead on that point, and you must promise me that the scoundrel will die by no other hand but mine.

AMP. Let us go.

SO. (*to* AMPHITRYON). I come, sir, on my knees, to suffer the chastisement I have deserved for my bold impudence. Strike, beat, thrash me, load me with blows; kill me in your anger; you will do but right, I deserve it, and I will never say a word against you because of it.

AMP. Arise; what is going on?

SO. I have been driven away. Thinking I was, like them, going to enjoy myself, and make merry at table, I had not thought that I was waiting there to beat myself. Yes, the other I, servant to the other you, has renewed all his devilish ways. The same unhappy destiny pursues us both to-day, and they dissosiate me as they disamphitryonise you.

AMP. Follow me.

SO. Would it not be safer to see if anybody is coming?

SCENE IX.—CLEANTHIS, AMPHITRYON, ARGOTIPHONTIDAS, POLIDAS, NAUCRATES, PAUSICLES, SOSIA.

CLE. O heavens!

AMP. What is it frightens you? How is it you look so scared at the sight of me?

CLE. You are up there, and yet I see you here!

NAU. (*to* AMPHITRYON). Do not hurry in. He is coming to give you every possible satisfaction; and if we are to believe him, it will be such as to deliver you from all sorrow and anxiety.

SCENE X.—CLEANTHIS, AMPHITRYON, ARGOTIPHONTIDAS, POLIDAS, NAUCRATES, PAUSICLES, SOSIA, MERCURY.

MER. Yes, you shall all see him. Know beforehand that it is the great master of the gods whom Alcmena has brought down from the heavens under the cherished features of that resemblance. For my part I am Mercury, who, not knowing what else to do, amused myself in thrashing a little the one whose face I had assumed. But now he can comfort himself; the cudgelling of a god honours him who receives it.

SO. In good sooth, sir god, I am your servant; I should have done very well without such expressions of your courtesy.

MER. Now, I give him leave to be Sosia again; I am tired of wearing such an ugly face, and I will away to heaven to wash it out with ambrosia.

(*He flies to heaven.*)

SO. Heaven grant that you may never wish again to come near me; your fury has been too violent, and never in my life did I see such a devil of a god.

SCENE XI.—JUPITER, AMPHITRYON, NAUCRATES, ARGOTIPHONTIDAS, POLIDAS, PAUSICLES, CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

JU. (*in a cloud on his eagle, announced by thunder and lightning*). Behold, Amphitryon, who it is that has imposed upon you, and with your own features see Jupiter appear. By these tokens you can easily know him; this is sufficient, I hope, to give back peace and happiness to your heart. My name, worshipped throughout the earth, silences all that may be said. To share with Jupiter has nothing dishonourable in it, and it can doubtless only be glorious to see oneself the rival of the sovereign of the gods. I see no occasion for your love to complain. It is I who ought to be jealous. Whatever care is taken, Alcmena loves but you, and your passion must be satisfied to find that there is no way of pleasing her but by assuming the shape of her husband. Jupiter adorned with his immortal glory could not, as himself, triumph over her fidelity, and all he

has received from her was given by her loving heart to you alone.

So. (*aside*). Our lord Jupiter knows how to gild the pill,

Ju. Give way no longer, then, to the gloomy sorrow from which you have suffered, and allow peace to return to your heart. In your house shall be born a son, who, under the name of Hercules, will fill the universe with the fame of his great deeds—a glorious fortune, of which a thousand blessings will to every one be a proof that I am your support. Every one shall envy your destiny. You can boast with certainty of these promises; it would be a crime to doubt them; the words of Jupiter are the decrees of fate. (*He vanishes in the clouds.*)

Nau. Truly, I am charmed with these glorious . . . .

So. Gentlemen, believe me, do not indulge in these congratulations; it is an uncomfortable business, and it would prove awkward for both sides to find expressions for such a compliment. The great god Jupiter does us great honour, and his goodness for us is no doubt unparalleled; he promises us the infallible happiness of a fortune abounding with countless blessings; and in our house is to be born a man of great courage. This is all very well, but let us cut short all kind of speeches, and let every one quickly regain his home. On such occasions it is always best to be silent.

GEORGE DANDIN;

OR, THE BAFFLED HUSBAND.

(GEORGE DANDIN; OU, LE MARI CONFONDU.)

This play, the only one in which Molière has brought on the stage a married lady forgetful of her duty,* was intended by him as a critique of the *bourgeois* of 1668, who all wanted to rise above their condition, and of the proud aristocracy who made use of their money while despising them. We have the same subject in 'Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme.'

It was played for the first time at Versailles, on the 18th of July, 1668. Molière acted the part of George Dandin; his wife that of Angélique.

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* We cannot make an exception of 'La Jalousie du Barbouillé,' for *Angélique* is practically the same character in both plays; see vol. i.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

GEORGE DANDIN, *a rich peasant, husband to* ANGÉLIQUE.

MR. DE SOTENVILLE, *a country-gentleman, father to* ANGÉLIQUE.

CLITANDRE, *in love with* ANGÉLIQUE.

LUBIN, *a peasant.*

COLIN, *servant to* GEORGE DANDIN.

ANGÉLIQUE, GEORGE DANDIN'S *wife, daughter to* MR. DE SOTENVILLE.

MRS. DE SOTENVILLE.

CLAUDINE, *maid to* ANGÉLIQUE.

The scene is before the house of GEORGE DANDIN, *in the country.*

GEORGE DANDIN;

OR, THE BAFFLED HUSBAND.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—GEORGE DANDIN (*alone*).

Ah! what a strange thing it is to have a gentlewoman for a wife, and what an instructive lesson my marriage is to all those peasants who want to rise above their condition, and who marry, as I have done, into the family of a gentleman. Blood is good in itself, and is certainly a thing worthy of consideration; but it is accompanied by so many uncomfortable circumstances, that the best thing is to have nothing to do with it. I have to my cost learnt a great deal on that subject, and I know what gentlefolks mean when they take us into their families. We ourselves are looked upon as of little consequence: it is our money they marry; and I, rich as I am, would have done much better, had I married some good plain country wench, instead of taking to myself a wife who considers herself above me, is ashamed to bear my name, and who thinks that with all my wealth I have not paid dearly enough for the honour of being her husband. George Dandin, George Dandin, you have made a blunder, the biggest blunder a man can make! My own house is now hateful to me, and I never enter it without meeting with some trouble or other.

SCENE II.—GEORGE DANDIN, LUBIN.

DAN. (*aside, seeing* LUBIN *come out of his house*). What in the world does that fellow come to my house for?

LUB. (*aside, seeing* DANDIN). That man is looking at me.

DAN. (*aside*). He does not know who I am.

LUB. (*aside*). He suspects something.

DAN. (*aside*). Well, he finds it difficult to take off his hat.

LUB. (*aside*). I am afraid he will say he saw me leaving that house.

DAN. Good morning to you.

LUB. Your servant.

DAN. You don't belong to this place, I see.

LUB. No: I only came to see the feast to-morrow.

DAN. Indeed! But tell me, pray, have you not just come out of yonder house?

LUB. Hush!

DAN. Eh?

LUB. Quiet!

DAN. What is the matter?

LUB. Mum! You mustn't say that you saw me come out there.

DAN. Why?

LUB. Why? why? Because . . . .

DAN. But still?

LUB. Hist! I'm afraid of our being overheard.

DAN. No fear, no fear.

LUB. Because, you see, I have just been to speak to the mistress of the house on the part of a certain gentleman who is making love to her, and nobody must know it. You understand?

DAN. Yes.

LUB. That's the reason. I've been told to be very careful that nobody sees me, and I beg of you not to say that you saw me.

DAN. I will take care.

LUB. I am pleased to do things secretly, as I was ordered.

DAN. You do quite right.

LUB. They say that the husband is very jealous, and that he won't allow people to make love to his wife, and that he would be furious if it came to his ears. You understand me?

DAN. Yes, quite.

LUB. He must know nothing of this.

DAN. Certainly not.

LUB. They want to befool him quietly. You know what I mean?

DAN. Perfectly.

LUB. If you were to say that you saw me come out of his house, you would spoil everything. You understand?

DAN. Quite. I say, what is the name of the man who sent you in there?

LUB. He is our squire, the Viscount of something . . . . Plague it! I never can recollect how the deuce they pronounce that name—Cli . . . . Clitandre.

DAN. Is it that young courtier who lives . . . .

LUB. Yes, over by those trees.

DAN. (*aside*). That's why that young fop has lately come to live close to me. I had a good nose, and his neighbourhood had already given rise to suspicions in my mind.

LUB. Sure, he's the civillest man you ever saw. He gave me three gold pieces only to go and tell the lady that he's in love with her, and that he longs for the honour of speaking to her. It was no great hardship, and the money is easily earned. Compare it with a day's work, where I only earn tenpence.

DAN. Well, have you delivered your message?

LUB. Yes, I found there a certain Claudine, who understood at once what I wanted, and who got me a chance of speaking with her mistress.

DAN. (*aside*). Ah, the hussy!

LUB. Lor'! That Claudine is very pretty, and she has won my heart; it will be her own fault if we are not married.

DAN. But what answer did the lady of the house send to that gentleman?

LUB. She told me to say to him . . . . Wait a moment, I don't know if I can remember it all perfectly—that she is very much obliged to him for the affection he has for her; that he must be very careful not to show it, because of her husband, who is a very queer fellow; and that they must contrive some way of seeing each other.

DAN. (*aside*). Oh, you scum of a wife!

LUB. By jingo! it'll be capital fun; for the husband will have no idea of what's up. Ah! ah! How awfully good!

DAN. Yes, true. We'll lead him a dance for his jealousy. Won't we, just!

LUB. Good-bye: mind you don't talk. Keep the secret, so that the husband mayn't know.

DAN. Yes, yes.

LUB. For my part, I shall go on as if nothing had happened. I am a sharp fellow, that I am; and no one'll think that I've had a finger in the pie.

SCENE III.—DANDIN (*alone*).

Well, George Dandin, you see how your wife treats you. You see what it is to marry a lady. They play you all sorts of tricks, without your being able to avenge yourself; and nobility binds your hands. When there is equality of rank, the husband has at least the power of paying off those who offend his honour; and if your wife were a country wench, you'd be at liberty to right yourself with a good cudgel. But you would meddle with the gentlefolk: you were tired of being the master in your own house! Ah! I am vexed beyond endurance, and I could willingly give myself a good thrashing. What! she listens impudently to the love of a coxcomb, and even promises to answer it! 'Sdeath! I'll not allow such a thing to pass unnoticed. I'll go at once to her father and mother, and make them see what cause of sorrow and revenge their daughter gives me. But here they both are, at the right moment.

SCENE IV.—MR. DE SOTENVILLE, MRS. DE SOTENVILLE, GEORGE DANDIN.

MR. SOT. What is the matter, son-in-law? you seem out of spirits.

DAN. I have good reason to be so, and . . . .

MRS. SOT. Goodness gracious, son-in-law! how little

civility you show, not to bow to people when you come near them.

DAN. Upon my word, mother-in-law, I have something else to think of, and . . . .

MRS. SOT. Again! is it possible, son-in-law, that you should so forget yourself, and that there should be no way of teaching you how to behave to people of quality?

DAN. What do you mean?

MRS. SOT. Will you never get rid of the familiar word "mother-in-law" when you talk to me, and could you not accustom yourself to call me "madam"?

DAN. Faith, if you call me "son-in-law," I don't see why I should not call you "mother-in-law."

MRS. SOT. There is much to say against it, and the case is not the same. Learn, if you please, that you have no right to use such a word to a person of my rank, and that, although you are our son-in-law, there exists a great difference between us, and that you ought to know your place.

MR. SOT. That will do, my dear; leave off now.

MRS. SOT. Really, Mr. de Sotenville, you are more indulgent than anyone ought to be, and you have no idea of making people give you your due.

MR. SOT. 'Gad! I beg your pardon, madam; no one has anything to teach me on that subject, and more than twenty times in my life have I shown in vigorous engagements that I am not a man to be trifled with or to abate one jot of my pretensions. But it is enough that you have reminded him. Let us know, son-in-law, what troubles you.

DAN. Since I must speak categorically, I will tell you, Mr. de Sotenville, that I have cause to . . . .

MR. SOT. Gently, son-in-law. Remember that it is not respectful to address people by their name, and that to those above you you should say "sir" only.

DAN. Well then, Sir only, and not Mr. de Sotenville, I have to tell you that my wife gives me . . . .

MR. SOT. Hold! Learn also that you are not to say "my wife" when you speak of our daughter.

DAN. I shall lose all patience. What! is not my wife, my wife?

MR. SOT. Yes, son-in-law, she is your wife; but you

have no business to call her so: you could do no more if you had married one of your equals.

DAN. (*aside*). Ah! George Dandin, in what a trap you are caught! (*aloud*) But, pray, lay aside your gentility for one moment, and allow me to speak to you as I best can. (*aside*) Deuce take this nonsensical tyranny! (*to* MR. DE SOTENVILLE) I have to tell you, then, that I am very much dissatisfied with my marriage.

MR. SOT. And for what reason, son-in-law?

MRS. SOT. What! you speak in that way of a marriage which has brought you such great advantages!

DAN. And what advantages, madam, since "madam" you will have? The business has not proved so very bad for you, after all; for without me your affairs would have been in a sad way. With your leave, my money has been found very useful in stopping many a large gap. But, for my part, what good have I got by it? unless it be the lengthening out of a name, and receiving from you the title of Mr. de la Dandinière instead of George Dandin.

MR. SOT. Do you count for nothing, son-in-law, the advantage of being allied to the house of Sotenville?

MRS. SOT. And to that of la Prudoterie, from which I have the honour to come,—a family where the females ennoble, and which, through this valuable privilege, will make your sons gentlemen.*

DAN. Yes, that's all very fine; my sons will be gentlemen, and in the meantime I shall be a cuckold, unless something is done to put a stop to it all.

MR. SOT. What do you mean by that, son-in-law?

DAN. I mean that your daughter does not live as a wife should live, and that she does things which are contrary to honour.

MRS. SOT. Gently; take care of what you are saying. My daughter belongs to too virtuous a race ever to do aught by which honour can be wounded; and as to the house de la Prudoterie, for more than three hundred years there never has been a woman, thank Heaven, who has given occasion for scandal.

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* An exceptional privilege; for the lady who married a *roturier* usually lost her rank, and the children were *roturiers*.

Mr. Sot. Zounds! there never has been a loose character in the house of de Sotenville; and valour is not more hereditary in the males than chastity in the women.

Mrs. Sot. We had a Jacqueline de la Prudoterie in my family, who would never consent to become the mistress of a duke and peer, governor of the province.

Mr. Sot. And there was one Mathurine de Sotenville, who refused twenty thousand crowns from one of the king's favourites, who only asked for the favour of speaking to her.

Dan. Ah! Well, your daughter is not so difficult as all that. She has become more tractable since she has been with me.

Mr. Sot. You must explain yourself, son-in-law. We are not people to take her part in aught that is wrong; and we shall be the first, her mother and myself, to do you justice.

Mrs. Sot. We never trifle in matters of honour, and we have brought her up in the greatest possible strictness.

Dan. All I can tell you is, that there lives close by a certain courtier who makes love to her under my very nose, and who sent her a declaration of love, to which she listened with great docility.

Mrs. Sot. Good heavens! I would strangle her with my own hands if she were to degenerate from her mother's virtue.

Mr. Sot. Zounds! I would run my sword both through her body and that of her lover, if she had forfeited her honour.

Dan. I have told you what is going on, so that you might judge for yourselves; and I ask for satisfaction in this matter.

Mr. Sot. Fear not. You shall have it from both of them. I am a man to show fight, let the man be who he may. But are you quite positive about what you say?

Dan. Quite.

Mr. Sot. See that you are; for between gentlemen these are ticklish matters. You must be careful not to commit a mistake in this business.

Dan. I have only told you the plain truth.

Mr. Sot. My dear, go and speak to your daughter, while I go with my son-in-law to see the man.

MRS. SOT. How could my daughter possibly forget herself so far, after all the good example which you know I have given her!

MR. SOT. We will clear up the matter. Come with me, son-in-law, and be easy. You shall see what metal we are made of when those who belong to us are insulted.

DAN. There he is, coming this way.

SCENE V.—MR. DE SOTENVILLE, CLITANDRE, GEORGE DANDIN.

MR. SOT. Sir, do you know me?

CLI. Not that I am aware of, sir.

MR. SOT. I am the Baron de Sotenville.

CLI. It gives me extreme pleasure to hear it.

MR. SOT. My name is well known at court; and in my youth I had the honour of showing my valour as one of the first in the *arrière-ban** at Nancy.

CLI. Very good, sir.

MR. SOT. My father, Jean-Gilles de Sotenville, had the glory, sir, of assisting in person at the great siege of Montauban.

CLI. I am delighted to know it.

MR. SOT. And I had an ancestor, Bertrand de Sotenville, who enjoyed such consideration in his time, that he was allowed to sell all he possessed and go beyond the seas.

CLI. I am willing to believe it.

MR. SOT. I have been told, sir, that you love and run after a young lady who is my daughter; and I am interested in her as well as in this man (*showing* GEORGE DANDIN), who has the honour of being my son-in-law.

CLI. Who? I?

MR. SOT. You, sir; and I am glad of the opportunity of speaking to you, to receive from you, if you please, an explanation on the subject.

CLI. This is a strange slander! Who could have told you this, sir?

MR. SOT. Some one who believes himself well informed.

CLI. That some one has told a falsehood. I am a man of honour. Do you think me capable of committing such a

* *Ban* and *arrière-ban*, originally service demanded of the possessors of fiefs; here military service demanded by the king.

base action as that, sir? I! love a charming young lady who has the honour to be the daughter of the Baron de Sotenville! I respect you too much for that, and am too much your humble servant. Whoever told you such a thing is a simpleton.

MR. SOT. Now, son-in-law!

DAN. What?

CLI. He is a rascal and a knave.

MR. SOT. (*to* GEORGE DANDIN). Answer him.

DAN. Answer him yourself.

CLI. If I knew who it could be, I would in your presence run him through the body.

MR. SOT. (*to* GEORGE DANDIN). Support your assertion.

DAN. It is supported. I have told the truth.

CLI. Is it your son-in-law, sir, who . . . .

MR. SOT. Yes, it is he himself who complained to me of it.

CLI. He may indeed be thankful of the honour of belonging to you, for otherwise I would soon teach him not to speak in such a manner of a man like me.

SCENE VI.—MR. DE SOTENVILLE, MRS. DE SOTENVILLE, ANGÉLIQUE, CLITANDRE, GEORGE DANDIN, CLAUDINE.

MRS. SOT. Jealousy, I must say, is a strange thing! I bring my daughter here to clear the matter before everybody.

CLI. (*to* ANGÉLIQUE). Is it you, madam, who told your husband that I love you?

ANG. I? How could I have said such a thing? Is it so, then? I should like to see you in love with me. Just try it, I beg of you; you will find to whom it is you speak! It is a thing I advise you to do! Have recourse, just to see, to all the cunning that lovers make use of. Try a little, for amusement, to send me messages, to write love letters secretly, to watch for the moment when my husband is not at home, or when I go out for a walk, to speak to me of your love; only just try, and you will see how you will be received.

CLI. There, there, madam; gently, if you please. There

is no need for you to lecture me so, and to be so scandalized. Who told you that I thought of loving you?

ANG. What is it all about, then? what am I to think of what is told me here?

CLI. Let them say what they please. You know best if ever I spoke of love to you when we met.

ANG. I should like to have seen you; you would have been well received!

CLI. I assure you that you have nothing to fear from me; I am not a man to cause sorrow to any lady; and I respect you too much, you and your parents, ever to dare to think of falling in love with you.

MRS. SOT. (*to* GEORGE DANDIN). There! you see!

MR. SOT. Son-in-law, you must be satisfied. What do you say to this?

DAN. I say that it is all a shuffling story. I know what I know, and this afternoon, since I must speak out, she received a message from him.

ANG. I! I received a message from him!

CLI. I sent a message!

ANG. Claudine.

CLI. (*to* CLAUDINE). Is that true?

CLAU. Ah well! this is a strange falsehood!

DAN. Hold your tongue, you jade! I know all about you, and it was you who took the messenger in.

CLAU. Who? I?

DAN. Yes, you; you needn't look so mealy-mouthed.

CLAU. Alas! How full of wickedness the world is now-a-days! To go and accuse me in that fashion,—I, who am innocence itself!

DAN. Hold your peace, you false tongue! You pretend to be good, but I have known you a long while, and you are a deceitful baggage.

CLAU. (*to* ANGÉLIQUE). Madam, have I . . . .?

DAN. Hold your tongue, I tell you, or you will have to pay for all the others, for you have not a gentleman for your father.

ANG. It is such a gross falsehood, and one which so wounds my heart, that I hardly have the strength to answer. It is horrible to be accused by one's husband when one has done no wrong to him! Alas! if I am to blame for anything, it is for treating him too well.

CLAU. That is the truth.

ANG. All my misfortune comes from my too great consideration of him. Would to Heaven I could tolerate, as he says, the love of some one else! I should not be so much to be pitied. Farewell, allow me to retire; I cannot bear to be insulted in this manner.

SCENE VII.—MR. DE SOTENVILLE, MRS. DE SOTENVILLE, CLITANDRE, GEORGE DANDIN, CLAUDINE.

MRS. SOT. (*to* GEORGE DANDIN). Go! You are not worthy of the virtuous wife we have given you.

CLAU. Indeed, he richly deserves that she should make him speak the truth; if I were in her place, I would not hesitate. (*to* CLITANDRE) Yes, sir, to punish him you ought to make love to my mistress. I advise you to try; it will not be lost time, and I will help you, since I have been accused of doing so already. (*Exit.*)

MR. SOT. Son-in-law, you deserve to have all these things said to you, and your conduct sets everybody against you.

MRS. SOT. Go! Remember to treat a well-born lady differently; and take care never again to commit such a blunder.

DAN. I shall go mad at thus being made to be wrong when I am right.

SCENE VIII.—MR. DE SOTENVILLE, CLITANDRE, GEORGE DANDIN.

CLI. (*to* MR. DE SOTENVILLE). You see, sir, that I have been falsely accused; you are a gentleman acquainted with the laws of honour, and I demand satisfaction.

MR. SOT. That is just, and it is the right way of proceeding. Come, son-in-law, give satisfaction to this gentleman.

DAN. How! satisfaction?

MR. SOT. Yes, according to the laws of honour, it must be so, for you have unjustly accused him.

DAN. It is a thing I don't acknowledge; I have not accused him unjustly, and I know what I think of it all.

MR. SOT. That doesn't matter. Whatever you may think, he denies that it is true. He gives satisfaction by so doing, and you have no right to complain of any man who disowns a thing.

DAN. So that, supposing I found him sleeping with my wife, all he would have to do to clear himself is to deny it?

MR. SOT. No arguments. Make your apologies to him, as I tell you.

DAN. I? Make apologies to him after . . . .

MR. SOT. Come, I tell you, it's no use hesitating, and you need not fear to say too much, since you are under my direction.

DAN. I could not . . . .

MR. SOT. Zounds! son-in-law, do not make me lose my temper, or I shall take his part against you. Come, be guided by me.

DAN. (*aside*). Ah! George Dandin!

MR. SOT. First, your hat in your hand; he is of noble blood, and you are not.

DAN. (*aside, his hat in his hand*). Confound it all!

MR. SOT. Repeat after me: Sir . . . .

DAN. Sir . . . .

MR. SOT. I ask your pardon . . . . (*seeing* GEORGE DANDIN *hesitate to obey*) Ah!

DAN. I ask your pardon . . . .

MR. SOT. For the evil thoughts which I had of you . . . .

DAN. For the evil thoughts which I had of you . . . .

MR. SOT. It was because I had not the honour of knowing you . . . .

DAN. It was because I had not the honour of knowing you . . . .

MR. SOT. And I beg of you to believe . . . .

DAN. And I beg of you to believe . . . .

MR. SOT. That I am your servant.

DAN. Would you have me be the servant of a man who wishes to deceive me?

MR. SOT. (*threatening him*). Ah!

CLI. I am satisfied, sir.

MR. SOT. No, I will have him go through with it, according to due form; that I am your servant.

DAN. That I am your servant.

CLI. (*to* GEORGE DANDIN). Sir, I am yours with all my heart; and I will remember no more what has taken place. (*to* MR. DE SOTENVILLE) Sir, I wish you good morning; and I am sorry for the trouble you have had.

MR. SOT. I kiss your hand, and will give you the pleasure of coursing a hare, whenever you feel disposed to come and see me.

CLI. You are too kind. (*Exit.*)

MR. SOT. This is the way, son-in-law, that matters ought to be managed. Farewell! Know that you have become united to a family that will always support you, and will never allow anyone to insult you. (*Exit.*)

SCENE IX.—GEORGE DANDIN.

Ah! that I . . . . You would do it; you would do it, George Dandin; you would do it! It serves you right; it serves you right! You have just what you deserve. . . . . Now, now, the only thing is to disabuse her father and mother; and I may find the way of succeeding.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—CLAUDINE, LUBIN.

CLAU. Yes, I guessed it was your fault, and that you must have told it to somebody who repeated it to master.

LUB. Now, upon my word, I only just said a few words about it to a man I met, so that he might not go and say he had seen me come out of the house. People must be great babblers in this place!

CLAU. Truly, that viscount made a fine choice in taking you for his messenger; and he has made use, this time, of a very lucky man.

LUB. Ah! be sure that another time I shall be more cunning. I'll take greater care of what I do.

CLAU. Yes, yes; 'twill be high time!

LUB. Don't let us speak of that any more. Listen to me.
CLAU. What do you want to say to me?
LUB. Turn your face a little towards me.
CLAU. Well, what is it?
LUB. Claudine.
CLAU. What?
LUB. Eh? there, now! don't you guess what I mean?
CLAU. No.
LUB. Blow me, Claudine, I love you!
CLAU. Quite sure?
LUB. Ay! deuce take me, if I don't. You may believe me, since I swear it.
CLAU. Ah! very well.
LUB. I feel all queerish-like, when I look at you.
CLAU. I am glad of it.
LUB. How do you manage to look so pretty?
CLAU. I do like other folks.
LUB. There's no need to spin a long yarn. If you like, you shall be my wife and I will be your husband, and we both will be husband and wife.
CLAU. Maybe, you would be jealous, like master.
LUB. No.
CLAU. For my part, I hate suspicious husbands, and I will only marry one who is scared at nothing; one so full of confidence, and so sure of my chastity, that he could see me, without anxiety, in the midst of thirty men.
LUB. Well, I shall be just like that.
CLAU. It is the most stupid thing in the world to mistrust a wife, and to torment her. The truth is, that one gains nothing by it. It only makes her think of wicked things, and it is generally the husbands who, with all their stupid nonsense, bring trouble upon themselves.
LUB. Very well; I will leave you free to do all you please.
CLAU. That is the way never to be deceived. When a husband trusts our discretion, we take no more liberty than what is right. It is exactly as with those who hold their purse open before us, and say, "Take." We make a modest use of it, and we are satisfied with what is reasonable; but we try to give the go-by to those who bother us, and we never spare them.

LUB. Don't be afraid, I shall be like those who open their purse; only marry me.

CLAU. Very well, very well; we shall see.

LUB. Come nearer, Claudine.

CLAU. What do you want?

LUB. Come, I say.

CLAU. Ah! gently. I don't like to be pawed.

LUB. Ah! just a little tiny caress.

CLAU. Leave me alone, I say. I don't understand jokes.

LUB. Claudine.

CLAU. (*pushing* LUBIN *away*). Have done!

LUB. How cruel you are to poor folks! Fie! how unkind to refuse people! Are you not ashamed to be so handsome, and yet not to be willing to be kissed? Come along, come.

CLAU. I'll slap your face for you!

LUB. Oh! oh! how fierce and wild she is! Fie upon you, cruel wench!

CLAU. You're too free.

LUB. What harm would it do you to let me have my way a bit?

CLAU. You must have patience.

LUB. Only a wee kiss. You may take it off after our marriage.

CLAU. I'm your servant.

LUB. Claudine, I beseech you, one on account.

CLAU. Nay, nay; I have been taken in before. Good-bye. Go and tell the viscount that I will give his note.

LUB. Good-bye, fair ass's colt!

CLAU. Affectionate that!

LUB. Good-bye, you rock! you flint! you stone-block, and all that's hardest in the world! (*Exit.*)

CLAU. I must give this to my mistress . . . . Ah! here she is, coming with her husband. I must away, and wait till she is alone.

SCENE II.—GEORGE DANDIN, ANGÉLIQUE.

DAN. No, no, I am not so easily deceived; and I am only too certain that what was told me is true. I have better eyes than people imagine, and your rubbishy speeches of this morning didn't throw dust in my eyes.

SCENE III.—CLITANDRE, ANGÉLIQUE, GEORGE DANDIN.

CLI. (*at the farther part of the stage*). Ah! there she is; but her husband is with her.

DAN. (*without seeing* CLITANDRE). Through all your affectation of wrath, I saw the truth of what had been told me, and the little respect you have for the tie that binds us. (CLITANDRE *and* ANGÉLIQUE *bow to each other.*) Goodness me! leave off such ceremony; it is not this kind of respect I speak to you of, and you need not be playing the fool with me.

ANG. I play the fool! indeed I am doing nothing of the kind.

DAN. I know what your thoughts are, and I understand . . . . (CLITANDRE *and* ANGÉLIQUE *bow to each other again.*) Again! Ah! no more of your joking. I am not ignorant that you think me much below you, because of your birth; and the respect I mean has nothing to do with my person. I only speak of the respect you owe to such a sacred tie as that of marriage. (ANGÉLIQUE *makes a sign to* CLITANDRE.) You need not shrug your shoulders, I am not talking nonsense.

ANG. Who is shrugging one's shoulders?

DAN. Ah, me! I see plainly enough. I tell you again that marriage is a tie for which we ought to have the greatest respect, and that it is very wrong of you to act as you do. (ANGÉLIQUE *nods to* CLITANDRE.) Yes, I repeat, very wrong of you. You need not nod your head, and make faces at me.

ANG. I am doing nothing of the kind. I don't know what you mean.

DAN. If you don't, I do; and I also know your contempt for me. If I am not born a nobleman, at least I am from a family that is without reproach; and the Dandins, from father to son . . . .

CLI. (*behind* ANGÉLIQUE, *without being seen by* GEORGE DANDIN). One moment's conversation.

DAN. (*not seeing* CLITANDRE). What is it you say?

ANG. I? Nothing. (GEORGE DANDIN *goes to the other side of his wife, and* CLITANDRE *retires, making him a profound bow.*)

SCENE IV.—GEORGE DANDIN, ANGÉLIQUE.

DAN. There he is, prowling after you.

ANG. Well, is it my fault? What do you wish me to do?

DAN. I wish you to do what a wife does when she wants to please her husband only. Whatever may be said, gallants never persist unless they are encouraged. There is a certain languishing manner which attracts them as honey does the flies; and virtuous women behave so as to drive them away at first.

ANG. I drive them away? But why? I am not shocked because they think me handsome; on the contrary, it pleases me.

DAN. It may be. But what part can a husband play in the gallantry?

ANG. The part of a sensible man, who is glad to see his wife admired.

DAN. I am your servant. It does not suit me, and the Dandins have never been accustomed to such fashions as these.

ANG. Oh, very well, then; the Dandins will get accustomed to it, whether they like it or not; for I declare to you that I have no intention whatever to renounce the world and to bury myself alive with a husband. What, because a man takes it into his head to marry us, we must say farewell to everything, and break off intercourse with the living? Strange tyranny in husbands! I admire them with their wish to see us dead to all pleasures and to live for them alone. I laugh at the idea, and do not wish to die so young.

DAN. Is it thus you keep the vows you publicly made to me?

ANG. I? I did not make them of my own accord; you forced them from me. Did you ask for my consent before our marriage, and whether I cared for you? You only consulted my father and mother: it is they, therefore, who have really married you, and you will do well always to complain to them of the wrongs which you may suffer. But I, who did not tell you to marry me, and

who had to become your wife without your consulting my feelings, I do not pretend to submit, like a slave, to your will; and I mean to enjoy the few happy days which youth has in reserve for me, make use of the sweet liberties which the age allows me, see the world a little, and taste the pleasure of hearing myself praised. Be prepared, then, for your punishment, and thank Heaven that I am incapable of doing worse.

DAN. Ah! that's how you mean to live? I am your husband, and I tell you that I do not approve of it.

ANG. I am your wife, and I tell you that I approve of it.

DAN. (*aside*). I feel such a temptation to beat her face to a jelly, and prevent her for ever from having those complimentary coxcombs about her! Ah! George Dandin, you won't be able to command yourself; better leave her. (*Exit.*)

SCENE V.—ANGÉLIQUE, CLAUDINE.

CLAU. I was very impatient to see him go, in order to give you this letter from you know whom.

ANG. Let me see.

CLAU. (*aside*). As far as I can judge, she is not displeased at what he writes to her.

ANG. Ah! Claudine, in what a charming manner this letter is worded! and what a pleasant way people of the court have of saying and doing everything! What a difference between them and our country folks!

CLAU. I should think that, after having seen them, the Dandins can't charm you much.

ANG. Stop here one moment; I will go and answer it at once.

CLAU. (*alone*). I don't think there is great need to tell her to make it favourable. But here come . . . .

SCENE VI.—CLITANDRE, LUBIN, CLAUDINE.

CLAU. Really, sir, you chose a clever messenger that time.

CLI. I did not dare to send any of my own servants;

but, my dear Claudine, I must reward you for the kind help I know you have given me (*feels in his pocket*).

CLAU. Ah! sir, there is no need. No, sir, you need not do anything of the kind. I do you service because you deserve it, and I feel at heart a certain inclination for you.

CLI. (*giving her some money*). I am much obliged to you.

LUB. (*to* CLAUDINE). Since we are to be married, give it me to put with mine.

CLAU. No; I will keep it along with the kiss.

CLI. (*to* CLAUDINE). Tell me, did you give my letter to your pretty mistress?

CLAU. Yes; and she is gone to answer it.

CLI. But, Claudine, is it not possible for me to speak to her?

CLAU. Yes, come with me; I will take you to her.

CLI. But will she be displeased? Is there no risk?

CLAU. No, no. Her husband is not at home; and, besides, it is not him she minds, it is her father and mother, and, provided they are hoodwinked, there is nothing else to fear.

CLI. I yield myself up to your guidance.

LUB. (*alone*). Heighho! What a clever wife I shall have! She has got head enough for four people.

SCENE VII.—GEORGE DANDIN, LUBIN.

DAN. (*aside*). That man again. Would to Heaven I could persuade him to bear witness to the father and mother of what they won't believe!

LUB. Ah! here you are, Mr. Talebearer, whom I told so much not to speak, and who promised me so that you would not. You must be a babbler, you must, to go and repeat what is said to you in secret.

DAN. I?

LUB. Yes, you have repeated to the husband every word I said, and you are the cause of all the commotion that has taken place. I am glad to know what a tongue you have, and that'll teach me never to tell you anything more.

DAN. Listen to me, friend.

LUB. If you hadn't blabbed, I would have told you what is going on just now, but, to punish you, you shall know nothing.

DAN. How? What is going on?

LUB. Nothing, nothing. This comes of your speaking; you'll hear no more about it, and I shall leave you.

DAN. Just stop one moment.

LUB. No.

DAN. I have only one word to tell you.

LUB. Nay, nay; you want to pump me.

DAN. No, it isn't for that.

LUB. Ah! you think me very foolish. I see what you're coming to.

DAN. It's quite another thing; listen to me.

LUB. I will have nothing to do with you. You would like me to tell you that the viscount has just given some money to Claudine, and that she has taken him to her mistress. But I am no such fool.

DAN. Pray . . . .

LUB. No.

DAN. I will give you . . . .

LUB. Hie diddle diddle.

SCENE VIII.—GEORGE DANDIN (*alone*).

I could not make use of that stupid fellow as I hoped to do. But the news that has just escaped him will do as well. If the gallant is in my house, the father and mother will see that I am right, and it will convince them fully of their daughter's shamelessness. The worst of this is that I don't know how to make use of the warning. If I go indoors, the rascal will escape, and whatever I may see myself of my dishonour, I shall never be believed; no, not even when I swear it; and they will say that I am crazy. If, on the other hand, I go and fetch my father-in-law and mother-in-law without being sure of finding the gallant there on my return, it will be just as bad, and I shall have to go again through all the ceremony of this morning. Could I manage to see if he is there still? (*after having looked through the key-hole*) Ah, ye heavens!

There is no longer any doubt about it; I have just seen him. Fate gives me an opportunity of bringing my adversary to shame, and as a finish, here are the very judges I wanted.

SCENE IX.—MR. DE SOTENVILLE, MRS. DE SOTENVILLE, GEORGE DANDIN.

DAN. You would not believe me before, and your daughter carried the day, but I can now show you how she treats me; and, thank Heaven, my dishonour is so plain that it is impossible to have a doubt about it.

MR. SOT. What, son-in-law, you are still harping on that string?

DAN. Yes, I am, and never had I greater cause to do so.

MRS. SOT. You come again to trouble our heads about that nonsense?

DAN. Yes, madam; and something worse is being done to mine.

MR. SOT. Are you not weary of rendering yourself disagreeable?

DAN. No, but I am weary of being taken for a dupe.

MRS. SOT. Will you not get rid of your absurd fancies?

DAN. No, madam; but I should like to get rid of a wife who dishonours me.

MRS. SOT. Just heaven! son-in-law, learn to talk properly.

MR. SOT. Zounds, sir! Find terms less offensive than these.

DAN. The loser can't laugh.

MR. SOT. Remember that you have married a lady.

DAN. I remember it well enough, and I shall remember it but too long.

MR. SOT. If you remember it, mind you speak more respectfully of her.

DAN. But why does she not try to behave more properly by me? What! because she is a lady, she must be at liberty to abuse me as much as she pleases, without my daring to say a word?

MR. SOT. What is the matter, and what have you to say?

Did you not see this morning how she cleared herself of all acquaintance with the person you had come to us to speak about?

DAN. Yes; but what would you say if I now show you that the gallant is with her?

MRS. SOT. With her?

DAN. Yes, with her, and in my house.

MR. SOT. In your house?

DAN. In my own house.

MRS. SOT. If it is so, we shall take your part against her.

MR. SOT. Yes, the honour of our family is dearer to us than anything else in the world; and if you speak the truth, we will disown her for our daughter and abandon her to your resentment.

DAN. Only follow me.

MR. SOT. Do not do as you did before.

DAN. Oh dear, no, you shall see (*showing* CLITANDRE, *who is coming out with* ANGÉLIQUE). There, did I speak the truth?

SCENE X.—ANGÉLIQUE, CLITANDRE, CLAUDINE; MR. DE SOTENVILLE, MRS. DE SOTENVILLE, *and* GEORGE DANDIN (*at the farther part of the stage*).

ANG. (*to* CLITANDRE). Good-bye. I am afraid of being seen here, and I have to be careful.

CLI. Promise me then, madam, that I shall see you to-night.

ANG. I will do what I can.

DAN. (*to* MR. *and* MRS. SOTENVILLE). Let us come softly behind and try not to be seen.

CLI. Ah! madam, we are undone. Here are your father and mother, and your husband with them.

ANG. O Heaven! (*aside to* CLITANDRE) Don't look as if there was anything the matter, and leave me to manage. (*aloud to* CLITANDRE) What! you dare to behave in this fashion after what has just happened, and it is thus you disguise your sentiments? They come to tell me that you are in love with me, and that you are taking measures to pay your addresses to me. I show my vexation and plainly

express my meaning to you before everybody. You deny the thing stoutly, and assure me that you never had any thought of offending me, and yet, the very same day, you are bold enough to come to my house to see me and tell me that you are in love with me; and say a hundred silly things to persuade me to respond to your follies. As if I were a woman to violate the vow I have made to my husband, and ever depart from the virtue my parents have taught me! If my father only heard of this, he would teach you to attempt such enterprises; but a virtuous woman does not like such display, and I shall be careful to say nothing to him about it. (*after having made a sign to* CLAUDINE *to bring her a stick*) I shall show you, though I am but a woman, that I have enough courage to avenge myself of the insults that are offered to me. What you have done is not worthy of a gentleman, nor is it like a gentleman that I shall treat you. (ANGÉLIQUE *takes the stick and pretends to strike* CLITANDRE, *who draws back so that the blows fall upon* GEORGE DANDIN.)

CLI. (*crying as if he had been beaten*). Oh! oh! oh! oh! oh! gently.

SCENE XI.—MR. DE SOTENVILLE, MRS. DE SOTENVILLE, ANGÉLIQUE, GEORGE DANDIN, CLAUDINE.

CLAU. Hard, madam; strike hard.

ANG. (*pretending to speak to* CLITANDRE). If you have anything more to say, I am ready to answer you.

CLAU. Learn to know with whom you are meddling.

ANG. (*affecting to be surprised*). Ah! father, you are there?

MR. SOT. Yes, my daughter, and I see that in courage and discretion you show yourself a worthy offspring of the house of de Sotenville. Come here and let me embrace you.

MRS. SOT. Kiss me also, daughter. Alas! I weep for joy, and I recognize my blood in what you have been doing.

MR. SOT. How delighted you must be, son-in-law! And how full of sweet promises this incident must prove to you! You had just cause to be alarmed, but nothing

could be more satisfactory than the way in which your suspicions have been cleared up.

MRS. SOT. I am sure, son-in-law, that you must now be the happiest man alive.

CLAU. No doubt about it. She is a pattern of a wife. You are too fortunate to have her, and you should kiss the ground she treads on.

DAN. (*aside*). Ah, traitress!

MR. SOT. What is it, son-in-law? why don't you thank your wife for all the love she shows for you?

ANG. No, no, father; it is not necessary. He is under no obligation to me for what he has just seen; all I have done is for my own self-respect.

MR. SOT. Where are you going, daughter?

ANG. I will withdraw, father, not to be obliged to receive his compliments.

CLAU. (*to* GEORGE DANDIN). She is right to be angry. Your wife deserves to be worshipped, and you do not treat her as you should.

DAN. (*aside*). Ah, wretch!

SCENE XII.—MR. DE SOTENVILLE, MRS. DE SOTENVILLE, GEORGE DANDIN.

MR. SOT. It is the remains of her vexation at what happened to-day, and it will pass away when you kiss her a little. Good-bye, son-in-law; you have no occasion to be anxious. Go and make peace together, and try to pacify her by apologizing for your anger.

MRS. SOT. You should consider that she is a young lady brought up to virtue, and who has never been accustomed to be suspected of any base action. Good-bye, I am glad to see your quarrels ended, and the transports of joy her conduct must afford you.

SCENE XIII.—GEORGE DANDIN (*alone*).

I don't say a word, for I should gain nothing by speaking. Was there ever anything equal to my disgrace! Yes, I wonder at my misfortune and at the subtle cunning with which my jade of a wife puts herself always in the right

and me always in the wrong. Is it possible that I shall always be outdone by her, and that appearances will always turn against me? that I shall never succeed in proving the guilt of the brazen-faced hussy? O Heaven! assist me in my endeavours, and grant me the favour of forcing people to see that I am dishonoured.

ACT III.*

Scene I.—Clitandre, Lubin.

Cli. The night is far gone, and I am afraid it may be too late. I can't see where I am going. Lubin!

Lub. Sir?

Cli. Is this the way?

Lub. I think so. What a stupid night to be so dark!

Cli. It is certainly wrong; but if on the one hand it prevents us from seeing, on the other it also prevents us from being seen.

Lub. You are right; it is not so much to blame, after all. I should like you very much to tell me, sir, as you are so clever, why it is not day at night?

Cli. That is a deep question, and one difficult to answer. You are inquisitive, Lubin.

Lub. Yes; if I had studied, I should have thought of things which were never thought of before.

Cli. I believe it. You look as if you had a subtle and penetrating mind.

Lub. It is quite true. Just see, I can explain Latin, although I have never studied it; and the other day, seeing *Collegium* written on a large door, I at once guessed that it meant *College*.

Cli. Wonderful! You can read then, Lubin?

Lub. Yes, I can read print; but I never could learn to read writing.

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* Much of this Act is taken from 'La Jalousie du Barbouillé,' vol. i.

CLI. We are close to the house. (*after striking his hands*) This is the signal Claudine gave me.

LUB. Upon my word, she is a girl worth her weight in gold. I love her with all my heart.

CLI. That's why I brought you to talk with her.

LUB. Sir, I am much . . . .

CLI. Hush, I hear a noise.

SCENE II.—ANGÉLIQUE, CLAUDINE, CLITANDRE, LUBIN.

ANG. Claudine.

CLAU. Well.

ANG. Leave the door half open.

CLAU. It is half open.

(*They all look for each other in the dark.*)

CLI. (*to* LUBIN). Here they are. Hush!

ANG. Hush!

LUB. Hush!

CLAU. Hush!

CLI. (*to* CLAUDINE, *whom he takes for* ANGÉLIQUE). Madam!

ANG. (*to* LUBIN, *whom she takes for* CLITANDRE). What?

LUB. (*to* ANGÉLIQUE, *whom he takes for* CLAUDINE). Claudine!

CLAU. (*to* CLITANDRE, *whom she takes for* LUBIN). What is it?

CLI. (*to* CLAUDINE, *thinking he is speaking to* ANGÉLIQUE). Ah! madam, how great my delight is!

LUB. (*to* ANGÉLIQUE, *thinking he is speaking to* CLAUDINE). Claudine! my dear Claudine!

CLAU. (*to* CLITANDRE). Gently, sir.

ANG. (*to* LUBIN). Hold, Lubin.

CLI. Is it you, Claudine?

CLAU. Yes.

LUB. Is it you, madam?

ANG. Yes.

CLAU. (*to* CLITANDRE). You took one for the other.

LUB. (*to* ANGÉLIQUE). Upon my word, one can't see a bit at night.

ANG. Are you not there, Clitandre?

CLI. Yes, madam.

ANG. My husband is snoring away finely, and I have taken this opportunity of coming to have a talk with you.

CLI. Let us look for a place to sit down.

CLAU. Yes, that's right.

(ANGÉLIQUE, CLITANDRE, *and* CLAUDINE *go and sit down at the farther part of the stage.*)

LUB. (*looking for* CLAUDINE). Claudine, whereabouts are you?

SCENE III.—ANGÉLIQUE, CLITANDRE, CLAUDINE (*seated*); GEORGE DANDIN (*half undressed*), LUBIN.

DAN. (*aside*). I heard my wife downstairs, and I have dressed quickly to follow her. Where can she be gone? Has she left the house?

LUB. (*looking for* CLAUDINE, *and mistaking* GEORGE DANDIN *for her*). Where are you, Claudine? Ah! here you are. Upon my word, your master is nicely caught, and I think it is as amusing as the cudgelling of this morning, of which I was told. Your mistress says that he is snoring now like old boots; he little knows that she and the viscount are together whilst he is asleep. I should like to know what he is dreaming of just now? It is really quite amusing. Why, too, should he be jealous of his wife, and wish to have her all to himself? He is a fool, and the viscount does him too much honour. You don't speak, Claudine; come, give me your little paw to kiss, and let us follow them. Ah! how sweet it is; it is like eating jam. (*to* GEORGE DANDIN, *whom he still takes for* CLAUDINE, *and who pushes him roughly away*) Goodness! how you go at it; that pretty little paw is terribly hard.

DAN. Who is there?

LUB. Nobody.

DAN. He runs away, and leaves me informed of the new treachery of that hussy of mine. Now, I must without delay send for her father and mother, and I hope that this adventure will end in my being divorced from her. Ho! Colin! Colin!

SCENE IV.—ANGÉLIQUE, CLITANDRE, CLAUDINE, LUBIN (*seated*); GEORGE DANDIN, COLIN.

COL. (*at the window*). Sir!

DAN. Quick, come down.

COL. (*jumps out of the window*). Here I am, as quick as can be.

DAN. Are you here?

COL. Yes, sir. (*Whilst* DANDIN *goes to speak to him on the side from which he heard his voice,* COLIN *goes to the other side and falls asleep.*)

DAN. (*turning to the side where he thinks* COLIN *is*). Softly; speak low. Listen to me. You must go to my stepfather and stepmother, and say that I beseech them to come immediately. Do you hear? Colin! Colin!

COL. (*on the other side, waking up*). Sir!

DAN. Where the deuce are you?

COL. Here.

DAN. Plague take the rascal! why do you leave me like that? (*Whilst* GEORGE DANDIN *goes to the side from which* COLIN *is speaking,* COLIN, *half-asleep, passes on the other side.*) I tell you, that you must go at once to fetch my father- and mother-in-law, and tell them to come here immediately. Do you hear? Answer me. Colin! Colin!

COL. (*on the other side, waking up*). Sir!

DAN. The rascal will drive me crazy. Come here. (*They run against one another, and both fall.*) Ah! the wretch; he has crippled me! Where are you? Come here, that I may administer you a sound cudgelling. I do believe he is avoiding me!

COL. Of course I am.

DAN. Will you come here?

COL. Nay, faith.

DAN. Come, I tell you.

COL. No. You want to beat me.

DAN. Well, no; I will not touch you.

COL. Quite sure?

DAN. Yes, come near (*to* COLIN, *whom he is holding by the arm*). Well, it is fortunate for you that I have need of you. Go quickly to my father- and mother-in-law; ask

them from me to come here as soon as they can, for an affair of the utmost importance. If they should make any difficulty on account of the time of night, don't fail to insist, and make them understand that it is of the greatest importance they should come, no matter how they are dressed. Do you understand me now?

COL. Yes, sir.

DAN. Go quickly, and make haste back (*thinking himself alone*), and I will go into the house again while . . . . But I hear somebody. Is it my wife? I must listen, and profit by this darkness.

(GEORGE DANDIN *stands close to the door of his house.*)

SCENE V. — ANGÉLIQUE, CLITANDRE, CLAUDINE, LUBIN, GEORGE DANDIN.

ANG. (*to* CLITANDRE). Good-bye! It is time to separate now.

CLI. What! so soon?

ANG. We have talked long enough.

CLI. Ah! madam, can I ever have enough conversation with you? and can I, in so short a time, tell you all I want to say? I should require whole days to explain to you all I feel, and I have not yet told you half.

ANG. We will hear more another time.

CLI. Alas! what a blow it is to me, when you speak of going; and what will my grief not be when you have left me?

ANG. We shall find the means of seeing each other again.

CLI. Yes; but I cannot help remembering that you are leaving me to go back to a husband. The thought kills me, and a husband's privileges are torturing things to a fond lover.

ANG. Are you weak enough to give way to such uneasiness? and do you think that we can really love a certain kind of husband? We marry them because we cannot do otherwise, and because we are dependent upon parents who think of nothing but money; but we know their worth, and we treat them as they deserve.

DAN. (*aside*). Just like our shameless wives!

CLI. Alas! one must acknowledge that the husband they have given you is very unworthy of the honour he has received; and it is a strange union to see a person like you with a man like him.

DAN. (*aside*). Poor husbands! that's how they serve you.

CLI. You deserve a very different fate. Heaven never intended you to be the wife of a peasant.

DAN. Would to Heaven she were yours! You would soon sing another tune. But it is enough. I will go in now.

(GEORGE DANDIN *goes in, and locks the door inside.*)

SCENE VI.—ANGÉLIQUE, CLITANDRE, CLAUDINE, LUBIN.

CLAU. Madam, if you have any harm to say of your husband, be quick, for it's growing late.

CLI. Ah! Claudine, how cruel you are!

ANG. (*to* CLITANDRE). She is right. We must part.

CLI. I must submit, then, since you will have it so; but I beseech you at least to pity me for the wretched moments I shall spend far from you.

ANG. Good-bye!

LUB. Where are you, Claudine, that I may give you my good night?

CLAU. All right, all right; I accept it at a distance, and send you mine.

SCENE VII.—ANGÉLIQUE, CLAUDINE.

ANG. Let us go in without noise.

CLAU. The door is shut.

ANG. I have the latch-key.

CLAU. Open gently.

ANG. It is bolted inside. I don't know what we can do.

CLAU. Call the servant who sleeps close here.

ANG. Colin! Colin! Colin!

SCENE VIII.—GEORGE DANDIN, ANGÉLIQUE, CLAUDINE.

DAN. (*at the window*). Colin! Colin! Ah! so I have caught you, madam my wife. You have little escapades while I am asleep, have you? I am very glad of it, and also to see you out of doors at this time of night.

ANG. Well! what harm is there in enjoying the cool air at night?

DAN. Yes, yes; the hour is well chosen for enjoying the cool air. More likely the warm air, Mistress Jade! We know all about the rendezvous and the gentleman. We heard your loving conversation and the fine verses in my praise which you repeated to each other. But my comfort is, that I shall soon be revenged, and that your father and mother will now be convinced of the justice of my complaints and of your bad behaviour. I have sent for them; they will be here in a moment.

ANG. Oh, heavens!

CLAU. Ah, madam!

DAN. You did not expect that, did you? It's my turn to triumph now, and I have wherewith to bring down your pride and spoil your plans. Until now you have laughed at my accusations; you have thrown dust in your parents' eyes, and plastered over your misdoings. It was in vain for me to see the truth, and to speak it; your cunning always got the better of my truthfulness, and you always found out some way or other to appear in the right. But this time, thank Heaven, matters will be seen in their true light, and your shamelessness will be confounded.

ANG. Ah! I pray you, let me in.

DAN. No, no: we must wait for the coming of those I have sent for. I wish them to find you out of doors at this time of night: in the meantime think, if you like, of some new stratagem to get out of this scrape. Invent some means to excuse this wild prank of yours: find some fine falsehood to deceive people and look innocent; some specious pretence of a nocturnal pilgrimage, or some friend in labour whom you went to assist.

ANG. No; I have no intention of disguising anything from you. I do not pretend to defend myself, nor to deny things, since you know it all.

DAN. This is because you see pretty well that you have no way of escape, and that you can't invent any excuse without my being able to prove it false.

ANG. Yes, I am wrong; I acknowledge it, and you have a right to complain. But, I beg of you, do not expose me this time to the displeasure of my parents, and have the door opened quickly for me.

DAN. I kiss your hand.

ANG. Ah! my poor dear husband, I beseech you!

DAN. "Ah, my poor dear husband!" I am your dear husband now, because you feel you are caught. I am glad of that; you never before thought of giving me such endearing names.

ANG. I promise you never to give you any cause for displeasure, and to . . . .

DAN. It is all of no use. I will not lose this opportunity, and they must, once for all, see for themselves how you behave.

ANG. For pity's sake, let me explain it all to you. I ask you to hear me but for one moment.

DAN. Well, what is it?

ANG. It is true that I have done wrong; I confess it to you once more. I deserve your anger, for I chose the time when you were asleep to go out, and I chose it to meet the person you know. But these are actions that you should excuse because of my age; the follies of a young girl who has no experience, and is only just beginning to see the world. These are liberties one takes without thinking of any harm, and which, no doubt, have in themselves nothing to . . . .

DAN. Yes, so you say; and I ought to put implicit faith in you, I suppose.

ANG. I do not mean to say by this that I have not been guilty towards you; and I only entreat you to forget an offence which, with all my heart, I beseech you to forgive me, and to spare me this time the sorrow which the hard reproaches of a father and mother may give me. If you generously grant me the favour I ask of you, this goodness, this kindness, will win me entirely over, will altogether touch my heart, and give me for you what all the authority of my parents and the marriage vows could

not produce. In a word, it will make me renounce all lovers, and I shall love no one but you. Yes, I give you my word that you will find me in future the best wife in the world: and I shall show you so much love, so much affection, that you will be quite contented with it.

DAN. Ah, crocodile! you flatter people to murder them!

ANG. Grant me that favour.

DAN. No; nothing from me. I am inexorable.

ANG. Show yourself generous.

DAN. No.

ANG. Have mercy!

DAN. Not a bit.

ANG. I beseech you with all my heart.

DAN. No, no, no. I want people to be undeceived about you, and your shame to be made public.

ANG. Well, then, since you drive me to despair, I forewarn you that a woman in my state of mind is capable of anything, and that I shall do something you will repent of.

DAN. And pray what will you do?

ANG. I will give way to the most desperate resolution, and with this knife kill myself on the spot.

DAN. Ah! ah! all right!

ANG. Not so much all right for you as you imagine. Everybody has heard of our quarrels, and the continual unkindness you show towards me. When they find me dead, nobody will doubt but that you have killed me, and my parents are not the people to let my death go unpunished, and they will avenge it against you with the severest punishments that justice and the warmth of their own resentment can devise. By this means I shall find a way of revenging myself upon you. I am not the first who has had recourse to such a revenge, and has not hesitated to die in order to ruin those who are cruel enough to drive them to the last extremity.

DAN. I am your servant. People now-a-days don't think of killing themselves; the fashion has been over for a long time.

ANG. You may rely upon my doing it; and if you persist in your refusal, if you do not open to me, I swear

to you that in a moment you will see how far the resolution of a woman driven to despair will go.

DAN. Rubbish! rubbish! You want to frighten me.

ANG. Very well, then; since it must be, I have here what will satisfy us both, and I will prove to you if I am in jest. (*after having feigned to kill herself*) Ah! it is done. May Heaven revenge my death according to my wish, and grant that he who is the cause of it may meet with a just punishment for his cruelty to me!

DAN. Oh! oh! could she be so wicked as to have killed herself, in order to cause me to be hanged? I'll take a candle and go and see.

SCENE IX.—ANGÉLIQUE, CLAUDINE.

ANG. Hush! Hush! Let us place ourselves quickly on each side of the door.

SCENE X.—ANGÉLIQUE *and* CLAUDINE *enter the house the moment* GEORGE DANDIN *leaves it, and lock the door inside.* GEORGE DANDIN, *a light in his hand.*

DAN. Could the malice of a woman go so far as that? (*alone, after having looked everywhere*) Nobody! Ah! I thought so; and the jade, finding that she could gain nothing of me either by prayers or threats, is gone away. So much the better! It will make matters worse for her, and her father and mother, who are coming, will be still more sure of her wickedness (*returns to his house, to go in*). Ah! the door is shut. Ho! there! somebody open the door quickly.

SCENE XI.—ANGÉLIQUE *and* CLAUDINE, *at the window;* GEORGE DANDIN.

ANG. How! Is that you? Where do you come from, you wretch? Is this an hour to come home, when daylight is near, and is this the way an honest husband should live?

CLAU. That's fine indeed, to go and drink all night, and leave a poor young wife all alone in the house.

DAN. How! you have . . . .

ANG. Get along, get along, you wretch! I am tired of your behaviour, and I will complain of it directly to my father and mother.

DAN. What! it is thus you dare . . . .

SCENE XII.—MR. *and* MRS. DE SOTENVILLE *(in their night-gear)*, COLIN *(carrying a lantern)*, ANGÉLIQUE *and* CLAUDINE *(at the window)*, GEORGE DANDIN.

ANG. *(to* MR. *and* MRS. DE SOTENVILLE). Come near, I pray you, and do me justice for the greatest insolence in the world, against a husband whose brain is so muddled by wine and jealousy that he knows neither what he is saying or doing. He has sent for you himself to be the witnesses of the strangest behaviour which was ever heard of. There he is, returning as you see, after making me wait all night for him: and, if you only listen to him, he will tell you that he has the worst complaints to make against me; that, whilst he slept, I left him to go gadding about, and a hundred stories of the same kind which he has taken into his head.

DAN. *(aside)*. The worthless trollop!

CLAU. Yes; he wants to make out that he was in the house, and that we were outside. It is an idea there is no way of getting out of his head.

MR. SOT. How? what does it all mean?

MRS. SOT. What an outrageous piece of impudence to send for us like that!

DAN. Never . . . .

ANG. No, father, I can no longer bear with such a husband; my patience is at an end. He has just been saying the most insulting things to me.

MR. SOT. *(to* GEORGE DANDIN). Zounds! sir, you are a vile fellow.

CLAU. It is the saddest thing to see a poor young wife treated after such a fashion, and it cries to Heaven for vengeance.

DAN. Can they . . . .?

MR. SOT. Go; you ought to die of shame.

DAN. Only allow me to say a couple of words.

ANG. If you listen to him, you will hear fine things.

DAN. (*aside*). I am in despair.

CLAU. He has been drinking so much that no one can stay near him; and the smell of the wine he exhales reaches even to us.

DAN. Sir, father-in-law, I pray you . . . .

MR. SOT. Draw back; your breath stinks of wine.

DAN. Madam, I beseech you . . . .

MRS. SOT. Fie! do not come near me. Your breath is quite poisonous.

DAN. (*to* MR. DE SOTENVILLE). Suffer me to . . . .

MR. SOT. Stand off, I tell you: you are unbearable.

DAN. (*to* MRS. DE SOTENVILLE). For mercy's sake, allow me to . . . .

MRS. SOT. Faugh! you make me sick. Speak at a distance, if you like.

DAN. Well, yes, I will speak at a distance. I swear to you that I never left the house, and that it was she who went out.

ANG. Did I not tell you so?

CLAU. You can judge how probable it is.

MR. SOT. (*to* GEORGE DANDIN). Nonsense. You want to make fools of us. Come down here, daughter.

SCENE XIII.—MR. *and* MRS. DE SOTENVILLE, GEORGE DANDIN, COLIN.

DAN. I take Heaven to witness that I was in the house, and that . . . .

MR. SOT. Hold your tongue; it is a piece of impudence which is beyond endurance.

DAN. Let Heaven crush me, if . . . .

MR. SOT. Don't deafen us any longer, and think of asking your wife's forgiveness.

DAN. I! ask forgiveness?

MR. SOT. Yes, and directly.

DAN. What! I . . . .

MR. SOT. Zounds! if you say another word, I will teach you what it is to trifle with us.

DAN. (*aside*). Ah! George Dandin!

SCENE XIV.—MR. *and* MRS. DE SOTENVILLE, ANGÉLIQUE, GEORGE DANDIN, CLAUDINE, LUBIN.

MR. SOT. Come here, daughter, so that your husband may ask you to forgive him.

ANG. I forgive him all that he has said to me? No, no, father, it is impossible for me to do such a thing; and I pray you to have me divorced from a husband with whom I can no longer live.

CLAU. Who could refuse it?

MR. SOT. Daughter, such separations do not take place without great scandal; and you must be wiser than he is, and be patient once more.

ANG. How! patient after such indignities? No, father, I can never consent.

MR. SOT. It must be done, daughter. I command you.

ANG. Your command forces me to silence, and you have absolute power over me.

CLAU. What a sweet temper!

ANG. It is hard to overlook such insults; but, however difficult it is for me, my first duty is to obey you.

CLAU. Poor lamb!

MR. SOT. (*to* ANGÉLIQUE). Come nearer.

ANG. All you are doing will be of no use, and you will see that it will all have to be done afresh to-morrow.

MR. SOT. We will see to that. (*to* GEORGE DANDIN) Come, down upon your knees.

DAN. Upon my knees!

MR. SOT. Yes, upon your knees; and quick, too.

DAN. (*aside, upon his knees, a light in his hand*). O Heaven! (*to* MR. DE SOTENVILLE) What do you want me to say?

MR. SOT. Madam, I beg you to forgive me . . . .

DAN. Madam, I beg you to forgive me . . . .

MR. SOT. The folly I have committed . . .

DAN. The folly I have committed . . . . (*aside*) in marrying you.

MR. SOT. And I promise you to behave better in future.

DAN. And I promise you to behave better in future.

MR. SOT. Take good care to do so, and remember that this is the last indignity we shall put up with.

MRS. SOT. Holy Virgin! if you ever begin again, we will teach you the respect you owe to your wife and to those from whom she comes.

MR. SOT. It will soon be daylight. Farewell! (*to* GEORGE DANDIN) Go in, and think of behaving properly. (*to* MRS. DE SOTENVILLE) And for us, my dear, let us go to bed.

SCENE XV.—GEORGE DANDIN (*alone*).

Ah! I give it up altogether. I no longer see any remedy. When one has, like me, married a bad wife, the only thing to be done is to go and throw oneself head foremost into the river.

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